327
An4f

53898

Presented
to the
DOANE COLLEGE LIBRARY
by
[redacted]
March 27, 1958
Date

WITHDRAWN
Doane College Library

53898

[redacted]

11-18-1921

THE FRUITS OF VICTORY

"THE GREAT ILLUSION" CONTROVERSY

' Mr. Angell's pamphlet was a work as unimposing in form as it was daring in expression. For a time nothing was heard of it in public, but many of us will remember the curious way in which . . . "Norman Angellism" suddenly became one of the principal topics of discussion amongst politicians and journalists all over Europe. Naturally at first it was the apparently extravagant and paradoxical elements that were fastened upon most—that the whole theory of the commercial basis of war was wrong, that no modern war could make a profit for the victors, and that—most astonishing thing of all—a successful war might leave the conquerors who received the indemnity relatively worse off than the conquered who paid it. People who had been brought up in the acceptance of the idea that a war between nations was analogous to the struggle of two errand boys for an apple, and that victory inevitably meant economic gain, were amazed into curiosity. Men who had never examined a Pacifist argument before read Mr. Angell's book. Perhaps they thought that his doctrines sounded so extraordinarily like nonsense that there really must be some sense in them or nobody would have dared to propound them.'—*The New Stateman*, October 11, 1913.

'The fundamental proposition of the book is a mistake. . . . And the proposition that the extension of national territory—that is the bringing of a large amount of property under a single administration—is not to the financial advantage of a nation appears to me as illusory as to maintain that business on a small capital is as profitable as on a large. . . . The armaments of European States now are not so much for protection against conquest as to secure to themselves the utmost possible share of the unexploited or imperfectly exploited regions of the world.'—The late ADMIRAL MAHAN.

'I have long ago described the policy of *The Great Illusion* . . . not only as a childish absurdity but a mischievous and immoral sophism.'—MR. FREDERIC HARRISON.

' Among the mass of printed books there are a few that may be counted as acts, not books. The *Contrat Social* was indisputably one; and I venture to suggest to you that *The Great Illusion* is another. The thesis of Galileo was not more diametrically opposed to current ideas than those of Norman Angell. Yet it had in the end a certain measure of success.'—VISCOUNT ESHER.

'When all criticisms are spent, it remains to express a debt of gratitude to Mr. Angell. He belongs to the cause of internationalism—the greatest of all the causes to which a man can set his hands in these days. The cause will not triumph by economics. But it cannot reject any ally. And if the economic appeal is not final, it has its weight. "We shall perish of hunger," it has been said, "in order to have success in murder." To those who have ears for that saying, it cannot be said too often.'—*Political Thought in England, from Herbert Spencer to the Present Day*, by ERNEST BARKER.

'A wealth of closely reasoned argument which makes the book one of the most damaging indictments that have yet appeared of the principles governing the relation of civilized nations to one another.'—*The Quarterly Review.*

'Ranks its author with Cobden amongst the greatest of our pamphleteers, perhaps the greatest since Swift.'—*The Nation.*

'No book has attracted wider attention or has done more to stimulate thought in the present century than *The Great Illusion.*'—*The Daily Mail.*

'One of the most brilliant contributions to the literature of international relations which has appeared for a very long time.'—*Journal of the Institute of Bankers.*

'After five and a half years in the wilderness, Mr. Norman Angell has come back. . . . His book provoked one of the great controversies of this generation. . . . To-day, Mr. Angell, whether he likes it or not, is a prophet whose prophesies have come true. . . . It is hardly possible to open a current newspaper without the eye lighting on some fresh vindication of the once despised and rejected doctrine of Norman Angellism.'—*The Daily News*, February 25, 1920.

THE FRUITS OF VICTORY

A SEQUEL TO
"THE GREAT ILLUSION"

BY

NORMAN ANGELL

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1921

WHITIN LIBRARY
BOWDOIN COLLEGE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

PATRIOTISM UNDER THREE FLAGS
THE GREAT ILLUSION
THE FOUNDATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL POLITY
WHY FREEDOM MATTERS
WAR AND THE WORKER
AMERICA AND THE WORLD STATE (AMERICA)
PRUSSIANISM AND ITS DESTRUCTION
THE WORLD'S HIGHWAY (AMERICA)
WAR AIMS
DANGERS OF HALF-PREPAREDNESS (AMERICA)
POLITICAL CONDITIONS OF ALLIED SUCCESS (AMERICA)
THE BRITISH REVOLUTION AND THE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY (AMERICA)
THE PEACE TREATY AND THE ECONOMIC CHAOS

Copyright, 1921, by
THE CENTURY CO.

Printed in the U. S. A.

327
An4f

To H. S.

3/27/58
WITHDRAWN
Doane College Library
53898

INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN EDITION

The case which is argued in these pages includes the examination of certain concrete matters which very obviously and directly touch important American interests—American foreign trade and investments, the exchanges, immigration, armaments, taxation, industrial unrest and the effect of these on social and political organisation. Yet the greatest American interest here discussed is not any one of those particular issues, or even the sum of them, but certain underlying forces which more than anything else, perhaps, influence all of them. The American reader will have missed the main bearing of the argument elaborated in these pages unless that point can be made clear.

Let us take a few of the concrete issues just mentioned. The opening chapter deals with the motives which may push Great Britain still to struggle for the retention of predominant power at sea. The force of those motives is obviously destined to be an important factor in American politics, in determining, for instance, the amount of American taxation. It bears upon the decisions which American voters and American statesmen will be called upon to make in American elections within the next few years. Or take another aspect of the same question: the peculiar position of Great Britain in the matter of her dependence upon foreign food. This is shown to be typical of a condition common to very much of the population of Europe, and brings us to the problem of the pressure of population in the older civilisations upon the

means of subsistence. That "biological pressure" is certain, in some circumstances, to raise for America questions of immigration, of relations generally with foreign countries, of defence, which American statesmanship will have to take into account in the form of definite legislation that will go on to American Statute books. Or, take the general problem of the economic reconstruction of Europe, with which the book is so largely occupied. That happens to bear, not merely on the expansion of American trade, the creation of new markets, that is, and on the recovery of American debts, but upon the preservation of markets for cotton, wheat, meat and other products, to which large American communities have in the past looked, and do still look, for their prosperity and even for their solvency. Again, dealing with the manner in which the War has affected the economic organisation of the European society, the writer has been led to describe the process by which preparation for modern war has come to mean, to an increasing degree, control by the government of the national resources as a whole, thus setting up strong tendencies towards a form of State Socialism. To America, herself facing a more far-reaching organisation of the national resources for military purposes than she has known in the past, the analysis of such a process is certainly of very direct concern. Not less so is the story of the relation of revolutionary forces in the industrial struggle—"Bolshevism"—to the tendencies so initiated or stimulated.

One could go on expanding this theme indefinitely, and write a whole book about America's concern in these things. But surely in these days it would be a book of platitudes, elaborately pointing out the obvious. Yet an American critic of these pages in their European form warns me that I must be careful to show their interest for American readers.

Their main interest for the American is not in the kind of relationship just indicated, very considerable and immediate as that happens to be. Their chief interest is in this: they

attempt an analysis of the ultimate forces of policies in Western society; of the interrelation of fundamental economic needs and of predominant political ideas—public opinion, with its constituent elements of "human nature," social—or anti-social—instinct, the tradition of Patriotism and Nationalism, the mechanism of the modern Press. It is suggested in these pages that some of the main factors of political action, the dominant motives of political conduct, are still grossly neglected by "practical statesmen"; and that the statesmen still treat as remote and irrelevant certain moral forces which recent events have shown to have very great and immediate practical importance. (A number of cases are discussed in which practical and realist European statesmen have seen their plans touching the stability of alliances, the creation of international credit, the issuing of international loans, indemnities, a "new world" generally, all this frustrated because in drawing them up they ignored the invisible but final factor of public feeling and temper, which the whole time they were modifying or creating, thus unconsciously undermining the edifices they were so painfully creating. Time and again in the last few years practical men of affairs in Europe have found themselves the helpless victims of a state of feeling or opinion which they so little understood that they had often themselves unknowingly created it.)

In such hard realities as the exaction of an indemnity, we see governments forced to policies which can only make their task more difficult, but which they are compelled to adopt in order to placate electoral opinion, or to repel an opposition which would exploit some prevailing prejudice or emotion.

To understand the nature of forces which must determine America's main domestic and foreign policies—as they have determined those of Western Society in Europe during the last generation—is surely an "American interest"; though indeed, in neglecting the significance of those "hidden currents flowing continually beneath the surface of political history,"

American students of politics would be following much European precedent. Although public opinion and feeling are the raw material with which statesmen deal, it is still considered irrelevant and academic to study the constituent elements of that raw material.

Americans are sufficiently detached from Europe to see that in the way of a better unification of that Continent for the purposes of its own economic and moral restoration stand disruptive forces of "Balkanisation," a development of the spirit of Nationalism which the statesmen for years have encouraged and exploited. The American of to-day speaks of the Balkanisation of Europe just as the Englishman of two or three years ago spoke of the Balkanisation of the Continent, of the wrangles of Poles, Czecho-Slovaks, Hungarians, Rumanians, Italians, Jugo-Slavs. And the attitude of both Englishman and American are alike in this: to the Englishman, watching the squabbles of all the little new States and the breaking out of all the little new wars, there seemed at work in that spectacle forces so suicidal that they could never in any degree touch his own political problems; the American to-day, watching British policy in Ireland or French policy towards Germany, feels that in such conflict are moral forces that could never produce similar paralysis in American policy. "Why," asks the confident American, "does England bring such unnecessary trouble upon herself by her military conduct in Ireland? Why does France keep three-fourths of a Continent still in ferment, making reparations more and more remote"? Americans have a very strong feeling that they could not be guilty of the Irish mess, or of prolonging the confusion which threatens to bring Europe's civilisation to utter collapse. How comes it that the English people, so genuinely and so sincerely horrified at the thought of what a Bissing could do in Belgium, unable to understand how the German people could tolerate a government guilty of such things, somehow find that their own British Government is

doing very similar things in Cork and Balbriggan; and finding it, simply acquiesce? To the American the indefensibility of British conduct is plain. "America could never be guilty of it." To the Englishman just now, the indefensibility of French conduct is plain. The policy which France is following is seen to be suicidal from the point of view of French interests. The Englishman is sure that "English political sense" would never tolerate it in an English government.

The situation suggests this question: would Americans deny that England in the past has shown very great political genius, or that the French people are alert, open-minded, "realist," intelligent? Recalling what England has done in the way of the establishment of great free communities, the flexibility and "practicalness" of her imperial policy, what France has contributed to democracy and European organisation, can we explain the present difficulties of Europe by the absence, on the part of Englishmen or Frenchmen, or other Europeans, of a political intelligence granted only so far in the world's history to Americans? In other words, do Americans seriously argue that the moral forces which have wrought such havoc in the foreign policy of European States could never threaten the foreign policy of America? Does the American plead that the circumstances which warp an Englishman's or Frenchman's judgment could never warp an American's? Or that he could never find himself in similar circumstances? As a matter of fact, of course, that is precisely what the American—like the Englishman or Frenchman or Italian in an analogous case—does plead. To have suggested five years ago to an Englishman that his own generals in India or Ireland would copy Bissing, would have been deemed too preposterous even for anger: but then equally, to Americans, supporting in their millions in 1916 the League to Enforce Peace, would the idea have seemed preposterous that a few years later America, having the power to take the lead in a Peace League, would refuse to do so, and would herself be demanding, as the result

of participation in a war to end war, greater armament than ever—as protection against Great Britain.

I suggest that if an English government can be led to sanction and defend in Ireland the identical things which shocked the world when committed in Belgium by Germans, if France today threatens Europe with a military hegemony not less mischievous than that which America determined to destroy, the causes of those things must be sought, not in the special wickedness of this or that nation, but in forces which may operate among any people.

One peculiarity of the prevailing political mind stands out. It is evident that a sensible, humane and intelligent people, even with historical political sense, can quite often fail to realise how one step of policy, taken willingly, must lead to the taking of other steps which they detest. If Mr. Lloyd George is supporting France, if the French Government is proclaiming policies which it knows to be disastrous, but which any French Government must offer to its people or perish, it is because somewhere in the past there have been set in motion forces the outcome of which was not realised. And if the outcome was not realised, although, looking back, or looking at the situation from the distance of America from Europe, the inevitability of the result seems plain enough, I suggest that it is because judgment becomes warped as the result of certain feelings or predominant ideas; and that it will be impossible wisely to guide political conduct without some understanding of the nature of those feelings and ideas, and unless we realise with some humility and honesty that all nations alike are subject to these weaknesses.

We all of us clamantly and absolutely deny this plain fact when it is suggested that it also applies to our own people. What would have happened to the publicist who, during the War, should have urged: "Complete and overwhelming victory will be bad, because we shall misuse it?" Yet all the victories of history would have been ground for such a warning.

Universal experience was not merely flouted by the uninstructed. One of the curiosities of war literature is the fashion in which the most brilliant minds, not alone in politics, but in literature and social science, simply disregard this obvious truth. We each knew "our" people—British, French, Italian, American—to be good people: kindly, idealistic, just. Give them the power to do the Right—to do justice, to respect the rights of others, to keep the peace—and it will be done. That is why we wanted "unconditional surrender" of the Germans, and indignantly rejected a negotiated peace. It was admitted, of course, that injustice at the settlement would fail to give us the world we fought for. It was preposterous to suppose that we, the defenders of freedom and democracy, arbitration, self-determination,—America, Britain, France, Japan, Russia, Italy, Rumania—should not do exact and complete justice. So convinced, indeed, were we of this that we may search in vain the works of all the Allied writers to whom any attention was paid, for any warning whatsoever of the one danger which, in fact, wrecked the settlement, threw the world back into its oldest difficulties, left it fundamentally just where it was, reduced the War to futility. The one condition of justice—that the aggrieved party should not be in the position of imposing his unrestrained will—,the one truth which, for the world's welfare, it was most important to proclaim, was the one which it was black heresy and blasphemy to utter, and which, to do them justice, the moral and intellectual guides of the nations never did utter.

It is precisely the truth which Americans to-day are refusing to face. We all admit that, "human nature being what it is," preponderance of power, irresponsible power, is something which no nation (but our own) can be trusted to use wisely or with justice. The backbone of American policy shall therefore be an effort to retain preponderance of power. If this be secured, little else matters. True, the American advocate of isolation to-day says: "We are not concerned with Europe.

We ask only to be let alone. Our preponderance of power, naval or other, threatens no-one. It is purely defensive." Yet the truth is that the demand for preponderance of armaments itself involves a denial of right. Let us see why.

No one denies that the desire to possess a definitely preponderant navy is related, at least in some degree, to such things as, shall we say, the dispute over the Panama tolls. A growing number feel and claim that that is a purely American dispute. To subject it to arbitral decision, in which necessarily Europeans would have a preponderance, would be to give away the American case beforehand. With unquestioned naval preponderance over any probable combination of rivals, America is in a position to enforce compliance with what she believes to be her just rights. At this moment a preponderant navy is being urged on precisely those grounds. In other words, the demand is that in a dispute to which she is a party she shall be judge, and able to impose her own judgement. That is to say, she demands from others the acceptance of a position which she would not herself accept. There is nothing at all unusual in the demand. It is the feeling which colours the whole attitude of combative nationalism. But it none the less means that "adequate defence" on this basis inevitably implies a moral aggression—a demand upon others which, if made by others upon ourselves, we should resist to the death.

It is not here merely or mainly the question of a right: American foreign policy has before it much the same alternatives with reference to the world as a whole, as were presented to Great Britain with reference to the Continent in the generation which preceded the War. Her "splendid isolation" was defended on grounds which very closely resemble those now put forward by America as the basis of the same policy. Isolation meant, of course, preponderance of power, and when she declared her intention to use that power only on behalf of even-handed justice, she not only meant it, but carried out the intention, at least to an extent that no other nation has

done. She accorded a degree of equality in economic treatment which is without parallel. One thing only led her to depart from justice: that was the need of maintaining the supremacy. For this she allowed herself to become involved in certain exceedingly entangling Alliances. Indeed, Great Britain found that at no period of her history were her domestic politics so much dominated by the foreign situation as when she was proclaiming to the world her splendid isolation from foreign entanglements. It is as certain, of course, that American "isolation" would mean that the taxation of Gopher Prairie would be settled in Tokio; and that tens of thousands of American youth would be sentenced to death by unknown elderly gentlemen in a European Cabinet meeting. If the American retorts that his country is in a fundamentally different position, because Great Britain possesses an Empire and America does not, that only proves how very much current ideas in politics fail to take cognizance of the facts. The United States to-day has in the problem of the Philippines, their protection and their trade, and the bearing of those things upon Japanese policy; in Hayti and the West Indies, and their bearing upon America's subject nationality problem of the negro; in Mexico, which is likely to provide America with its Irish problem; in the Panama Canal tolls question and its relation to the development of a mercantile marine and naval competition with Great Britain, in these things alone, to mention no others, subjects of conflict, involving defence of American interests, out of which will arise entanglements not differing greatly in kind from the foreign questions which dominated British domestic policy during the period of British isolation.

Now, what America will do about these things will not depend upon highly rationalised decisions, reached by a hundred million independent thinkers investigating the facts concerning the Panama Treaty, the respective merits of alternative alliance combinations, or the real nature of negro grievances.

American policy will be determined by the same character of force as has determined British policy in Ireland or India, in Morocco or Egypt, French policy in Germany or in Poland, or Italian policy in the Adriatic. The "way of thinking" which is applied to the decisions of the American democracy has behind it the same kind of moral and intellectual force that we find in the society of Western Europe as a whole. Behind the American public mind lie practically the same economic system based on private property, the same kind of political democracy, the same character of scholastic training, the same conceptions of nationalism, roughly the same social and moral values. If we find certain sovereign ideas determining the course of British or French or Italian policy, giving us certain results, we may be sure that the same ideas will, in the case of America, give us very much the same results.

When Britain spoke of "splendid isolation," she meant what America means by the term to-day, namely, a position by virtue of which, when it came to a conflict of policy between herself and others, she should possess preponderant power, so that she could impose her own view of her own rights, be judge and executioner in her own case. To have suggested to an Englishman twenty years ago that the real danger to the security of his country lay in the attitude of mind dominant among Englishmen themselves, that the fundamental defect of English policy was that it asked of others something which Englishmen would never accord if asked by others of them, and that such a policy was particularly inimical in the long run to Great Britain, in that her population lived by processes which dominant power could not, in the last resort, exact—such a line of argument would have been, and indeed was, regarded as too remote from practical affairs to be worth the attention of practical politicians. A discussion of the Japanese Alliance, the relations with Russia, the size of foreign fleets, the Bagdad railway, would have been regarded as entirely practical and relevant. These things were the "facts" of politics. It was

not regarded as relevant to the practical issues to examine the rôle of certain general ideas and traditions which had grown up in England in determining the form of British policy. The growth of a crude philosophy of militarism, based on a social pseudo-Darwinism, the popularity of Kipling and Roberts, the jingoism of the Northcliffe Press—these things might be regarded as items in the study of social psychology; they were not regarded as matters for the practical statesman. "What would you have us do about them, anyway?"

It has happened to the present writer, in addressing American students, to lay stress upon the rôle of certain dominant ideas in determining policy (upon the idea, say, of the State as a person, upon the conception of States as necessarily rival entities), and afterwards to get questions in this wise: "Your lecture seems to imply an internationalist policy. What is your plan? What ought we to do? Should we make a naval alliance wth Great Britain, or form a new League of Nations, or denounce Article X, or . . . ?" I have replied: "The first thing to do is to change your ideas and moral values; or to get to know them better. That is the most practical and immediate platform, because all others depend on it. We all profess great love of peace and justice. What will you pay for it, in terms of national sovereignty? What degree of sovereignty will you surrender as your contribution to a new order? If your real feeling is for domination, then the only effect of writing constitutions of the League of Nations will be to render international organisation more remote than ever, by showing how utterly incompatible it is with prevailing moral values."

But such a reply is usually regarded as hopelessly "unpractical." There is no indication of something to be "done"—a platform to be defended or a law to be passed. To change fundamental opinions and redirect desires is not apparently to "do" anything at all. Yet until that invisible thing is done

our Covenants and Leagues will be as futile as have been the numberless similar plans of the past, "concerning which," as one seventeenth century critic wrote, "I know no single imperfection save this: That by no possibility would any Prince or people be brought to abide by them." It was, I believe, regarded as a triumph of practical organisation to have obtained nation-wide support for the 'League to Enforce Peace' proposal, "without raising controversial matters at all"—leaving untouched, that is, the underlying ideas of patriotism, of national right and international obligation, the prevailing moral and political values, in fact. The subsequent history of America's relation to the world's effort to create a League of Nations is sufficient commentary as to whether it is "practical" to devise plans and constitutions without reference to a prevailing attitude of mind.

America has before her certain definite problems of foreign policy—Japanese immigration into the United States and the Philippines; concessions granted to foreigners in Mexico; the question of disorder in that country; the relations with Hayti (which will bear on the question of America's subject nationality, the negro); the exemption of American ships from tolls in the Panama Canal; the exclusion of foreign shipping from "coastwise" trade with the Philippines. It would be possible to draw up plans of settlement with regard to each item which would be equitable. But the development of foreign policy (which, more than any other department of politics, will fix the quality of American society in the future) will not depend upon the more or less equitable settlement of those specific questions. The specific differences between England and Germany before the War were less serious than those between England and America—and were nearly all settled when war broke out. Whether an issue like Japanese immigration or the Panama tolls leads to war will not depend upon its intrinsic importance, or whether Britain or Japan or America make acceptable proposals on the subject. Mr ex-Secretary

Daniels has just told us that the assertion of the right to establish a cable station on the Island of Yap is good ground for risking war.) The specific issues about which nations fight are so little the real cause of the fight that they are generally completely forgotten when it comes to making the peace. The future of submarine warfare was not mentioned at Versailles. Given a certain state of mind, a difference about cables on the Island of Yap is quite sufficient to make war inevitable. We should probably regard it as a matter of national honour, concerning which there must be no argument. Another mood, and it would be impossible to get the faintest ripple of interest in the subject.

It was not British passion for Serbian nationality which brought Britain to the side of Russia in 1914. It was the fear of German power and what might be done with it, a fear wrought to frenzy pitch by a long indoctrination concerning German wickedness and aggression. Passion for the subjugation of Germany persisted long after there was any ground of fear of what German power might accomplish. If America fights Japan, it will not be over cables on Yap; it will be from fear of Japanese power, the previous stimulation of latent hatreds for the strange and foreign. And if the United States goes to war over Panama Canal tolls, it will not be because the millions who will get excited over that question have examined the matter, or possess ships or shares in ships that will profit by the exemption; it will be because all America has read of Irish atrocities which recall school-day histories of British atrocities in the American Colonies; because the "person," Britain, has become a hateful and hostile person, and must be punished and coerced.

War either with Japan or Britain or both is, of course, quite within the region of possibility. It is merely an evasion of the trouble which facing reality always involves, to say that war between Britain and America is "unthinkable." If any war, as we have known it these last ten years, is thinkable,

war between nations that have already fought two wars is obviously not unthinkable. And those who can recall at all vividly the forces which marked the growth of the conflict between Britain and Germany will see just those forces beginning to colour the relations of Britain and America. Among those forces none is more notable than this: a disturbing tendency to stop short at the ultimate questions, a failure to face the basic causes of divergence. Among people of good will there is a tendency to say: "Don't let's talk about it. Be discreet. Let us assume we are good friends and we shall be. Let us exchange visits." In just such a way, even within a few weeks of war, did people of good will in England and Germany decide not to talk of their differences, to be discreet, to exchange visits. But the men of ill will talked—talked of the wrong things—and sowed their deadly poison.

These pages suggest why neither side in the Anglo-German conflict came down to realities before the War. To have come to fundamentals would have revealed the fact to both parties that any real settlement would have asked things which neither would grant. Really to have secured Germany's future economic security would have meant putting her access to the resources of India and Africa upon a basis of Treaty, of contract. That was for Britain the end of Empire, as Imperialists understood it. To have secured in exchange the end of "marching and drilling" would have been the end of military glory for Prussia. For both it would have meant the surrender of certain dominations, a recasting of patriotic ideals, a revolution of ideas.

Whether Britain and America are to fight may very well depend upon this: whether the blinder and more unconscious motives rooted in traditional patriotisms, and the impulse to the assertion of power, will work their evil before the development of ideas has brought home to us a clearer vision of the abyss into which we fall; before we have modified, in other words, our tradition of patriotism, our political moralities, our

standard of values. Without that more fundamental change no scheme of settlement of specific differences, no platforms, Covenants, Constitution can avail, or have any chance of acceptance or success.

As a contribution to that change of ideas and of values these pages are offered.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

THE central conclusion suggested by the following analysis of the events of the past few years is that, underlying the disruptive processes so evidently at work—especially in the international field—is the deep-rooted instinct to the assertion of domination, preponderant power. This impulse sanctioned and strengthened by prevailing traditions of 'mystic' patriotism, has been unguided and unchecked by any adequate realisation either of its anti-social quality, the destructiveness inseparable from its operation, or its ineffectiveness to ends indispensable to civilisation.

The psychological roots of the impulse are so deep that we shall continue to yield to it until we realise more fully its danger and inadequacy to certain vital ends like sustenance for our people, and come to see that if civilisation is to be carried on we must turn to other motives. (We may then develop a new political tradition, which will 'discipline' instinct, as the tradition of toleration disciplined religious fanaticism when that passion threatened to shatter European society.)

Herein lies the importance of demonstrating the economic futility of military power. While it may be true that conscious economic motives enter very little into the struggle of nations, and are a very small part of the passions of patriotism and nationalism, it is by a realisation of the economic truth regarding the indispensable condition of adequate life, that those passions will be checked, or redirected and civilised.

This does not mean that economic considerations should

dominate life, but rather the contrary—that those considerations will dominate it if the economic truth is neglected. A people that starves is a people thinking only of material things —food. The way to dispose of economic pre-occupations is to solve the economic problem.

The bearing of this argument is that developed by the present writer in a previous book, *The Great Illusion,* and the extent to which it has been vindicated by events, is shown in the Addendum.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	OUR DAILY BREAD	3
II	THE OLD ECONOMY AND THE POST-WAR STATE .	61
III	NATIONALITY, ECONOMICS, AND THE ASSERTION OF RIGHT	81
IV	MILITARY PREDOMINANCE—AND INSECURITY . .	112
V	PATRIOTISM AND POWER IN WAR AND PEACE: THE SOCIAL OUTCOME	142
VI	THE ALTERNATIVE RISKS OF STATUS AND CONTRACT	169
VII	THE SPIRITUAL ROOTS OF THE SETTLEMENT . .	199
	ADDENDUM: SOME NOTES ON 'THE GREAT ILLUSION' AND ITS PRESENT RELEVANCE . . .	253

I. The 'Impossibility of War' Myth. II. 'Economic' and 'Moral' Motives in International Affairs. III. The 'Great Illusion' Argument. IV. Arguments now out of date. V. The Argument as an attack on the State. VI. Vindication by Events. VII. Could the War have been prevented?

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I (pp. 3-60)

OUR DAILY BREAD

An examination of the present conditions in Europe shows that much of its dense population (particularly that of these islands) cannot live at a standard necessary for civilisation (leisure, social peace, individual freedom) except by certain co-operative processes which must be carried on largely across frontiers. (The prosperity of Britain depends on the production by foreigners of a surplus of food and raw material above their own needs.) The present distress is not mainly the result of the physical destruction of war (famine or shortage is worst, as in the Austrian and German and Russian areas, where there has been no destruction). The Continent as a whole has the same soil and natural resources and technical knowledge as when it fed its populations. The causes of its present failure at self-support are moral: economic paralysis following political disintegration, 'Balkanisation'; that, in its turn, due to certain passions and prepossessions.

A corresponding phenomenon is revealed within each national society: a decline of production due to certain moral disorders, mainly in the political field; to 'unrest,' a greater cleavage between groups, rendering the indispensable co-operation less effective.

The necessary co-operation, whether as between nations or groups within each nation, cannot be compelled by physical coercion, though disruptive forces inseparable from the use of coercion can paralyse co-operation. Allied preponderance of power over Germany does not suffice to obtain indemnities, or even coal in the quantities demanded by the Treaty. The output of the workers in Great Britain would not necessarily be improved by adding to the army or police force. As interdependence increases, the limits of coercion are narrowed. Enemies that are to pay large indemnities must be permitted actively to develop their economic life and power; they are then so potentially strong that enforcement of the demands becomes correspondingly expensive and uncertain. Knowledge and organisation acquired by workers for the purposes of their labour can be used to resist oppression. Railwaymen or miners driven to work by force would still find means of resistance. A proletarian dictatorship cannot coerce the production of food by an unwilling peasantry. The processes by which wealth is produced have, by increasing complexity, become of a kind which can only be maintained if there be present a large measure of voluntary acquiescence, which means, in its turn, confidence. The need for that is only made the more imperative by the conditions which have followed the virtual suspension of the gold standard in all the belligerent States of Europe, the collapse of the exchanges and other manifestations of instability of the currencies.

European statesmanship, as revealed in the Treaty of Versailles, and in the conduct of international affairs since the Armistice, has recognised neither the fact of interdependence —the need for the economic unity of Europe—nor the futility of attempted coercion. Certain political ideas and passions give us an unworkable Europe. What is their nature? How have they arisen? How can they be corrected? These questions are part of the problem of sustenance; which is the first indispensable of civilisation.

CHAPTER II (pp. 61-80)

THE OLD ECONOMY AND THE POST-WAR STATE

The trans-national processes which enabled Europe to support itself before the War were based mainly on private exchanges prompted by the expectation of individual advantage. They were not dependent upon political power. (The fifteen millions for whom German soil could not provide lived by trade with countries over which Germany had no political control, as a similar number of British live by similar non-political means.)

The old individualist economy has been largely destroyed by the State Socialism introduced for war purposes: the nation, taking over individual enterprise, became trader and manufacturer in increasing degree. The economic clauses of the Treaty, if enforced, must prolong this tendency, rendering a large measure of such Socialism permanent.

The change may be desirable. But if co-operation must in future be less as between individuals for private advantage, and much more as between *nations,* governments acting in an economic capacity, the political emotions of nationalisation will play a much larger rôle in the economic processes of Europe. If to Nationalist hostilities as we have known them in the past is to be added the commercial rivalry of nations now converted into traders and capitalists, we are likely to have not a less but a more quarrelsome world, unless the fact of interdependence is much more vividly realised than in the past.

CHAPTER III (pp. 81-111)

NATIONALITY, ECONOMICS, AND THE ASSERTION OF RIGHT

The change noted in the preceding chapter raises a profound question of Right—Have we the right to use our power to deny to others the means of life? By our political power we *can* create a Europe which, while not assuring advantage to the

victor, deprives the vanquished of means of existence. The loss of both ore and coal by the Central Powers might well make it impossible for their future populations to find food. What are they to do? Starve? To disclaim responsibility is to claim that we are entitled to use our power to deny them life.

This 'right' to starve foreigners can only be invoked by invoking the conception of nationalism—('Our nation first.') But the policy of placing life itself upon a foundation of preponderant force, instead of mutually advantageous co-operation, compels statesmen perpetually to betray the principle of nationality; not only directly, (as in the case of the annexation of territory, economically necessary, but containing peoples of alien nationality,) but indirectly; for the resistance which our policy (of denying means of subsistence to others) provokes, makes preponderance of power the condition of survival. All else must give way to that need.

Might cannot be pledged to Right in these conditions. If our power is pledged to Allies for the purpose of the Balance (which means, in fact, preponderance), it cannot be used against them to enforce respect for (say) nationality. To turn against Allies would break the Balance. To maintain the Balance of Power we are compelled to disregard the moral merits of an Ally's policy (as in the case of the promise to the Czar's government not to demand the independence of Poland). The maintenance of a Balance (*i.e.* preponderance) is incompatible with the maintenance of Right. There is a conflict of obligation.

CHAPTER IV (pp. 112-141)

MILITARY PREDOMINANCE—AND INSECURITY

The moral questions raised in the preceding chapter have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of military power based

on the National unit, or a group of National units, such as an Alliance. Military preponderance of the smaller Western National units over large and potentially powerful groups, like the German or the Russian, must necessitate stable and prolonged co-operation. But, as the present condition of the Alliance which fought the War shows, the rivalries inseparable from the fears and resentments of 'instinctive' nationalism, make that prolonged co-operation impossible. The qualities of Nationalism which stand in the way of Internationalism stand also in the way of stable alliances (which are a form of Internationalism) and make them extremely unstable foundations of power.

The difficulties encountered by the Allies in taking combined action in Russia show that to this fundamental instability due to the moral nature of Nationalism, must be added, as causes of military paralysis, the economic disruption which reduces the available material resources, and the social unrest (largely the result of the economic difficulties) which undermines the cohesion even of the national unit.

These forces render military predominance based on the temporary co-operation of units still preserving the Nationalist outlook extremely precarious and unreliable.

CHAPTER V (pp. 142-168)

PATRIOTISM AND POWER IN WAR AND PEACE: THE SOCIAL OUTCOME

The greatest and most obvious present need of Europe, for the salvation of its civilisation, is unity and co-operation. Yet the predominant forces of its politics push to conflict and disunity. If it is the calculating selfishness of 'realist' statesmen that thus produces impoverishment and bankruptcy, the calculation would seem to be defective. The Balkanisation of Europe obviously springs, however, from sources belonging to our patriotisms, which are mainly uncalculating and

instinctive, 'mystic' impulses and passions. Can we safely give these instinctive pugnacities full play?

One side of patriotism—gregariousness, 'herd instinct'— has a socially protective origin, and is probably in some form indispensable. But coupled with uncontrolled pugnacity, tribal gregariousness grows into violent partisanship as against other groups, and greatly strengthens the instinct to coercion, the desire to impose our power.

In war-time, pugnacity, partisanship, coerciveness can find full satisfaction in the fight against the enemy. But when the war is over, these instincts, which have become so highly developed, still seek satisfaction. They may find it in two ways: in conflict between Allies, or in strife between groups within the nation.

We may here find an explanation of what seems otherwise a moral enigma: that just *after a war,* universally lauded as a means of national unity, 'bringing all classes together,' the country is distraught by bitter social chaos, amounting to revolutionary menace; and that after the war which was to wipe out at last all the old differences which divided the Allies, their relations are worse than before the War (as in the case of Britain and America and Britain and France).

Why should the fashionable lady, capable of sincere self-sacrifice (scrubbing hospital floors and tending canteens) for her countrymen when they are soldiers, become completely indifferent to the same countrymen when they have returned to civil life (often dangerous and hard, as in mining and fishing)? In the latter case there is no common enmity uniting duchess and miner.

Another enigma may be solved in the same way: why military terrorism, unprovoked war, secret diplomacy, autocratic tyranny, violation of nationality, which genuinely appal us when committed by the enemy, leave us unmoved when 'political necessity' provokes very similar conduct on our part; why the ideals for which we went to war become matters of in-

difference to us when we have achieved victory. Gregariousness, which has become intense partisanship, makes right that which our side does or desires; wrong that which the other side does.

This is fatal, not merely to justice, but to sincerity, to intellectual rectitude, to the capacity to see the truth objectively. It explains why we can, at the end of a war, excuse or espouse the very policies which the war was waged to make impossible.

CHAPTER VI (pp. 169-198)

THE ALTERNATIVE RISKS OF STATUS AND CONTRACT

Instinct, being co-terminous with all animal life, is a motive of conduct immeasurably older and more deeply rooted than reasoning based on experience. So long as the instinctive, 'natural' action succeeds, or appears to succeed in its object, we do not trouble to examine the results of instinct or to reason. Only failure causes us to do that.

We have seen that the pugnacities, gregariousness, group partisanship embodied in patriotism, give a strong emotional push to domination, the assertion of our power over others as a means of settling our relations with them. Physical coercion marks all the early methods in politics (as in autocracy and feudalism), in economics (as in slavery), and even in the relations of the sexes.

But we try other methods (and manage to restrain our impulse sufficiently) when we really discover that force won't work. When we find we cannot coerce a man but still need his service, we offer him inducements, bargain with him, enter a contract. This is the result of realising that we really need him, and cannot compel him. That is the history of the development from status to contract.

Stable international co-operation cannot come in any other way. Not until we realise the failure of national coercive power for indispensable ends (like the food of our people)

shall we cease to idealise power and to put our intensest political emotions, like those of patriotism, behind it.

The alternative to preponderance is partnership of power. Both may imply the employment of force (as in policing), but the latter makes force the instrument of a conscious social purpose, offering to the rival that challenges the force (as in the case of the individual criminal within the nation) the same rights as those claimed by the users of force. Force as employed by competitive nationalism does not do this. It says 'You or me,' not 'You and me.' The method of social co-operation may fail temporarily; but it has the perpetual opportunity of success. It succeeds the moment that the two parties both accept it. But the other method is bound to fail; the two parties cannot both accept it. Both cannot be masters. Both can be partners.

The failure of preponderant power on a nationalist basis for indispensable ends would be self-evident but for the push of the instincts which warp our judgment.

Yet faith in the social method is the condition of its success. It is a choice of risks. We distrust and arm. Others, then, are entitled also to distrust; their arming is our justification for distrusting them. The policy of suspicion justifies itself. To allay suspicion we must accept the risk of trust. That, too, will justify itself.

Man's future depends on making the better choice, for either the distrust or the faith will justify itself. His judgment will not be fit to make that choice if it is warped by the passions of pugnacity and hate that we have cultivated as part of the apparatus of war.

CHAPTER VII (pp. 199-251)

THE SPIRITUAL ROOTS OF THE SETTLEMENT

If our instinctive pugnacities and hates are uncontrollable, and they dictate conduct, no more is to be said. We are the

helpless victims of outside forces, and may as well surrender. But many who urge this most insistently in the case of our patriotic pugnacities obviously do not believe it: their demands for the suppression of 'defeatist' propaganda during the War, their support of war-time propaganda for the maintenance of morale, their present fears of the 'deadly infection' of Bolshevist ideas, indicate, on the contrary, a very real belief that feelings can be subject to an extremely rapid modification or redirection. In human society mere instinct has always been modified or directed in some measure by taboos, traditions, conventions, constituting a social discipline. The character of that discipline is largely determined by some sense of social need, developed as the result of the suggestion of transmitted ideas, discussions, intellectual ferment.

The feeling which made the Treaty inevitable was the result of a partly unconscious but also partly conscious propaganda of war half-truths, built up on a sub-structure of deeply rooted nationalist conceptions. The systematic exploitation of German atrocities, and the systematic suppression of similar Allied offences, the systematic suppression of every good deed done by our enemy, constituted a monstrous half-truth. It had the effect of fortifying the conception of the enemy people as a single person; its complete collective responsibility. Any one of them—child, woman, invalid—could properly be punished (by famine, say) for any other's guilt. Peace became a problem of repressing or destroying this entirely bad person by a combination of nations entirely good.

This falsified the nature of the problem, gave free rein to natural and instinctive retaliations, obscured the simplest human realities, and rendered possible ferocious cruelty on the part of the Allies. There would have been in any case a strong tendency to ignore even the facts which in Allied interest should have been considered. In the best circumstances it would have been extremely difficult to put through a Wilsonian (type 1918) policy, involving restraint of the sacred egoisms,

the impulsive retaliations, the desire for dominion inherent in 'intense' nationalisms. The efficiency of the machinery by which the Governments for the purpose of war formed the mind of the nation, made it out of the question.

If ever the passions which gather around the patriotisms disrupting and Balkanising Europe are to be disciplined or directed by a better social tradition, we must face without pretence or self-deception the results which show the real nature of the older political moralities. We must tell truths that disturb strong prejudices.

THE FRUITS OF VICTORY

THE FRUITS OF VICTORY

CHAPTER I

OUR DAILY BREAD

I

The relation of certain economic facts to Britain's independence and Social Peace

POLITICAL instinct in England, particularly in the shaping of naval policy, has always recognised the intimate relation which must exist between an uninterrupted flow of food to these shores and the preservation of national independence. An enemy in a position to stop that flow would enjoy not merely an economic but a political power over us—the power to starve us into ignominious submission to his will.

The fact has, of course, for generations been the main argument for Britain's right to maintain unquestioned command of the sea. In the discussions before the War concerning the German challenge to our naval power, it was again and again pointed out that Britain's position was very special: what is a matter of life and death for her had no equivalent importance for other powers. And it was when the Kaiser announced that Germany's future was upon the sea that British fear became acute! The instinct of self-preservation became aroused by the thought of the possible possession in hostile hands of an instrument that could sever vital arteries.

The fact shows how impossible it is to divide off into water-

tight compartments the 'economic' from the political or moral. To preserve the capacity to feed our people, to see that our children shall have milk, is certainly an economic affair—a commercial one even. But it is an indispensable condition also of the defence of our country, of the preservation of our national freedom. The ultimate end behind the determination to preserve a preponderant navy may be purely nationalist or moral; the means is the maintenance of a certain economic situation.

Indeed the task of ensuring the daily bread of the people touches moral and social issues nearer and more intimate even than the preservation of our national independence. The inexorable rise in the cost of living, the unemployment and loss and insecurity which accompany a rapid fall in prices, are probably the predominating factors in a social unrest which may end in transforming the whole texture of Western society. The worker finds his increased wage continually nullified by increase of price. Out of this situation arises an exasperation which, naturally enough, with peoples habituated by five years of war to violence and emotional mass-judgments, finds expression, not necessarily in organised revolution—that implies, after all, a plan of programme, a hope of a new order—but rather in sullen resentment; declining production, the menace of general chaos. However restricted the resources of a country may have become, there will always be some people under a régime of private capital and individual enterprise who will have more than a mere sufficiency, whose means will reach to luxury and even ostentation. They may be few in number; the amount of waste their luxury represents may in comparison with the total resources be unimportant. But their existence will suffice to give colour to the charge of profiteering and exploitation and to render still more acute the sullen discontent, and finally perhaps the tendency to violence.

It is in such a situation that the price of a few prime necessaries—bread, coal, milk, sugar, clothing—becomes a social,

political, and moral fact of the first importance. A two-shilling loaf may well be a social and political portent.

In the week preceding the writing of these lines five cabinets have fallen in Europe. The least common denominator in the cause is the grinding poverty which is common to the peoples they ruled. In two cases the governments fell avowedly over the question of bread, maintained by subsidy at a fraction of its commercial cost. Everywhere the social atmosphere, the temper of the workers, responds to stimulus of that kind.

When we reach the stage at which mothers are forced to see their children slowly die for lack of milk and bread, or the decencies of life are lost in a sordid scramble for sheer physical existence, then the economic problem becomes the gravest moral problem. The two are merged.

The obvious truth that, if economic preoccupations are not to dominate the minds and absorb the energies of men to the exclusion of less material things, then the fundamental economic needs must be satisfied; the fact, that though the foundations are certainly not the whole building, civilisation does rest upon foundations of food, shelter, fuel, and that if it is to be stable they must be sound—these things have been rendered commonplace by events since the Armistice. But before the War they were not commonplaces. The suggestion that the economic results of war were worth considering was quite commonly rejected as 'offensive,' implying that men went to war for 'profit.' Nations in going to war, we were told, were lifted beyond the region of 'economics.' The conception that the neglect of the economics of war might mean—as it has meant—the slow torture of tens of millions of children and the disintegration of whole civilisations, and that if those who professed to be the trustees of their fellows were not considering these things they ought to be—this was, very curiously as it now seems to us at this date, regarded as sordid and material. We now see that the things of the spirit depend upon the solution of these material problems.

The one fact which stood out clear above all others after the Armistice was the actual shortage of goods at a time when millions were literally dying of hunger. The decline of productivity was obvious. It was due in part to diversion of energies to the task of war, to the destruction of materials, failure in many cases to maintain plant (factories, railways, roads, housing); to a varying degree of industrial and commercial demoralisation arising out of the War and, later, out of the struggle for political rearrangements both within States and as between States; to the shortening of the hours of labour; to the dislocation, first of mobilisation, and then of demobilisation; to relaxation of effort as reaction from the special strain of war; to the demoralisation of credit owing to war-time financial shifts. We had all these factors of reduced productivity on the one side, and on the other a generally increased habit and standard of expenditure, due in part to a stimulation of spending power owing to the inflation of the currency and in part to the recklessness which usually follows war; and above all an increasingly insistent demand on the part of the worker everywhere in Europe for a higher general standard of living, that is to say, not only a larger share of the diminished product of his labour, but a larger absolute amount drawn from a diminished total.

This created an economic *impasse*—the familiar 'vicious circle.' The decline in the purchasing power of money and the rise in the rate of interest set up demands for compensating increases both of wages and of profits, which increases in turn added to the cost of production, to prices. And so on *da capo*. As the first and last remedy for this condition one thing was urged, to the exclusion of almost all else—increased production. The King, the Cabinet, economists, Trades Union leaders, the newspapers, the Churches, all agreed upon that one solution. Until well into the autumn of 1920 all were enjoining upon the workers their duty of an ever-increasing output.

By the end of that year, workers, who had on numberless occasions been told that their one salvation was to increase

their output, and who had been upbraided in no mild terms because of their tendency to diminish output, were being discharged in their hundreds of thousands because there was a paralysing over-production and glut! Half a world was famished and unclothed, but vast stores of British goods were rotting and multitudes of workers unemployed. America revealed the same phenomena. After stories of the fabulous wealth which had come to her as the result of the War and the destruction of her commercial competitors, we find, in the winter of 1920-21 that over great areas in the South and West her farmers are near to bankruptcy because their cotton and wheat are unsaleable at prices that are remunerative, and her industrial unemployment problem as acute as it has been in a generation. So bad is it, indeed, that the Labour Unions are unable to resist the Open Shop campaign forced upon them by the employers, a campaign menacing the gains in labour organisation that it has taken more than a generation to make. America's commercial competitors being now satisfactorily disposed of by the War, and 'the economic conquest of the world' being now open to that country, we find the agricultural interests (particularly cotton and wheat) demanding government aid for the purpose of putting these aforesaid competitors once more on their feet (by loan) in order that they may buy American products. But the loans can only be repaid and the products paid for in goods. This, of course, constitutes, in terms of nationalist economics, a 'menace.' So the same Congress which receives demands for government credits to European countries, also receives demands for the enactment of Protectionist legislation, which will effectually prevent the European creditors from repaying the loans or paying for the purchases. The spectacle is a measure of the chaos in our thinking on international economics.[1]

[1] But British policy can hardly be called less contradictory. A year after the enactment of a Treaty which quite avowedly was framed for the purpose of checking the development of German trade, we find

But the fact we are for the moment mainly concerned with is this: on the one side millions perishing for lack of corn or cotton; on the other corn and cotton in such abundance that they are burned, and their producers face bankruptcy.

Obviously therefore it is not merely a question of production, but of production adjusted to consumption, and vice versa; of proper distribution of purchasing power, and a network of processes which must be in increasing degree consciously controlled. We should never have supposed that mere production would suffice, if there did not perpetually slip from our minds the very elementary truth that in a world where division of labour exists wealth is not a material but a material plus a

---

the unemployment crisis producing on the part of the *New Statesman* the following comment:—

'It must be admitted, however, that the present wave of depression and unemployment is far more an international than a national problem. The abolition of "casual labour" and the adoption of a system of "industrial maintenance" would appreciably affect it. The international aspect of the question has always been important, but never so overwhelmingly important as it is to-day.

'The present great depression, however, is not normal. It is due in the main to the breakdown of credit and the demoralisation of the "exchanges" throughout Europe. France cannot buy locomotives in England if she has to pay 60 francs to the pound sterling. Germany, with an exchange of 260 (instead of the pre-war 20) marks to the pound, can buy scarcely anything. Russia, for other reasons cannot buy at all. And even neutral countries like Sweden and Denmark, which made much money out of the war and whose "exchanges" are fairly normal, are financially almost *hors de combat,* owing presumably to the ruin of Germany. There appears to be no remedy for this position save the economic rehabilitation of Central Europe.

'As long as German workmen are unable to exercise their full productive capacity, English workmen will be unemployed. That, at present, is the root of the problem. For the last two years we, as an industrial nation, have been cutting off our nose to spite our face. In so far as we ruin Germany we are ruining ourselves; and in so far as we refuse to trade with revolutionary Russia we are increasing the likelihood of violent upheavals in Great Britain. Sooner or later we shall have to scrap every Treaty that has been signed and begin again the creation of the New Europe on the basis of universal co-operation and mutual aid. Where we have demanded indemnities we must offer loans.

'A system of international credit—founded necessarily on British credit—is as great a necessity for ourselves as it is for Central Europe. We must finance our customers or lose them and share their ruin, sinking deeper every month into the morass of doles and relief works. That is the main lesson of the present crisis.'—(Jan. 1st., 1921.)

process—a process of exchange. Our minds are still dominated by the mediæval aspect of wealth as a 'possession' of static material such as land, not as part of a flow. It is that oversight which probably produced the War; it certainly produced certain clauses of the Treaty. The wealth of England is not coal, because if we could not exchange it (or the manufactures and services based on it) for other things—mainly food—it certainly would not even feed our population. And the process by which coal becomes bread is only possible by virtue of certain adjustments, which can only be made if there be present such things as a measure of political security, stability of conditions enabling us to know that crops can be gathered, transported and sold for money of stable value; if there be in other words the indispensable element of contract, confidence, rendering possible the indispensable device of credit. And as the self-sufficing economic unit—quite obviously in the case of England, less obviously but hardly less certainly in other notable cases—cannot be the national unit, the field of the contract—the necessary stability of credit, that is—must be, if not international, then trans-national. All of which is extremely elementary; and almost entirely overlooked by our statesmanship, as reflected in the Settlement and in the conduct of policy since the Armistice.

2

Britain's dependence on the production by foreigners of a surplus of food and raw materials beyond their own needs

The matter may be clarified if we summarise what precedes, and much of what follows, in this proposition:—

The present conditions in Europe show that much of its dense population (notably the population of these islands) can

only live at a standard necessary for civilisation (leisure, social peace, individual freedom) by means of certain co-operative processes, which must be carried on largely across frontiers. The mere physical existence of much of the population of Britain is dependent upon the production by foreigners of a surplus of food and raw materials beyond their own needs.

The processes of production have become of the complex kind which cannot be compelled by preponderant power, exacted by physical coercion.

But the attempt at such coercion, the inevitable results of a policy aimed at securing predominant power, provoking resistance and friction, can and does paralyse the necessary processes, and by so doing is undermining the economic foundations of British life.

What are the facts supporting the foregoing proposition?

Many whose instincts of national protection would become immediately alert at the possibility of a naval blockade of these islands, remain indifferent to the possibility of a blockade arising in another but every bit as effective a fashion.

That is through the failure of the food and raw material, upon which our populations and our industries depend, to be produced at all owing to the progressive social disintegration which seems to be going on over the greater part of the world. To the degree to which it is true to say that Britain's life is dependent upon her fleet, it is true to say that it is dependent upon the production by foreigners of a surplus above their own needs of food and raw material. This is the most fundamental fact in the economic situation of Britain: a large portion of her population are fed by the exchange of coal, or services and manufactures based on coal, for the surplus production, mainly food and raw material, of peoples living overseas.[1] Whether

[1] Out of a population of 45,000,000 our home-grown wheat suffices for only about 12,500,000, on the basis of the 1919-20 crop. Sir Henry Rew, *Food Supplies in Peace and War,* says: 'On the basis of our

the failure of food to reach us were due to the sinking of our ships at sea or the failure of those ships to obtain cargoes at the port of embarkation the result in the end would be the same. Indeed, the latter method, if complete, would be the more serious as an armistice or surrender would not bring relief.

The hypothesis has been put in an extreme form in order to depict the situation as vividly as possible. But such a condition as the complete failure of the foreigner's surplus does not seem to-day so preposterous as it might have done five years ago. For that surplus has shrunk enormously and great areas that once contributed to feeding us can do so no longer. Those areas already include Russia, Siberia, the Balkans, and a large part of the Near and Far East. What we are practically concerned with, of course, is not the immediate disappearance of that surplus on which our industries depend, but the degree to which its reduction increases for us the cost of food, and so intensifies all the social problems that arise out of an increasing cost of living. Let the standard alike of consumption and production of our overseas white customers decline to the standard of India and China, and our foreign trade would correspondingly decrease; the decline in the world's production of food would mean that much less for us; it would reduce the volume of our trade, or in terms of our own products, cost that much more; this in turn would increase the cost of our manufactures, create an economic situation which one could describe with infinite technical complexity, but which, however technical and complex that description were made, would finally come to this—that our own toil would become less productive.

That is a relatively new situation. In the youth of men now living, these islands with their twenty-five or thirty million

---

present population . . . we should still need to import 78 per cent. of our requirements.' (p. 165). Before the War, according to the same authority, home produce supplied 48 per cent. in food value of the total consumption, but the table on which this figure is based does not include sugar, tea, coffee, or cocoa.

population were, so far as vital needs are concerned, self-sufficing. What will be the situation when the children now growing up in our homes become members of a British population which may number fifty, sixty, or seventy millions? (Germany's population, which, at the outbreak of war, was nearly seventy millions, was in 1870 a good deal less than the present population of Great Britain.)

Moreover, the problem is affected by what is perhaps the most important economic change in the world since the industrial revolution, namely the alteration in the ratio of the exchange value of manufactures and food—the shift over of advantage in exchange from the side of the industrialist and manufacturer to the side of the producer of food.

Until the last years of the nineteenth century the world was a place in which it was relatively easy to produce food, and nearly the whole of its population was doing it. In North and South America, in Russia, Siberia, China, India, the universal occupation was agriculture, carried on largely (save in the case of China and India) upon new soil, its first fertility as yet unexhausted. A tiny minority of the world's population only was engaged in industry in the modern sense: in producing things in factories by machinery, in making iron and steel. Only in Great Britain, in Northern Germany, in a few districts in the United States, had large-scale industry been systematically developed. It is easy to see, therefore, what immense advantage in exchange the industrialist had. What he had for sale was relatively scarce; what the agriculturist had for sale was produced the world over and was, *in terms of manufactures,* extremely cheap. It was the economic paradox of the time that in countries like America, South and North, the farmer—the producer of food—was naturally visualised as a poverty-stricken individual—a 'hayseed' dressed in cotton jeans, without the conveniences and amenities of civilisation, while it was in the few industrial centres that the vast wealth was being piled up. But as the new land in North America and

Argentina and Siberia became occupied and its first fertility exhausted, as the migration from the land to the towns set in, it became possible with the spread of technical training throughout the world, with the wider distribution of mechanical power and the development of transport, for every country in some measure to engage in manufacture, and the older industrial centres lost some of their monopoly advantage in dealing with the food producer. In Cobden's day it was almost true to say that England spun cotton for the world. To-day cotton is spun where cotton is grown; in India, in the Southern States of America, in China.

This is a condition which (as the pages which follow reveal in greater detail) the intensification of nationalism and its hostility to international arrangement will render very much more acute. The patriotism of the future China or Argentina —or India and Australia, for that matter—may demand the home production of goods now bought in (say) England. It may not in economic terms benefit the populations who thus insist upon a complete national economy. But 'defence is more than opulence.' The very insecurity which the absence of a definitely organised international order involves will be invoked as justifying the attempt at economic self-sufficiency. Nationalism creates the situation to which it points as justification for its policy: it makes the very real dangers that it fears. And as Nationalism thus breaks up the efficient transnational division of labour and diminishes total productivity, the resultant pressure of population or diminished means of subsistence will push to keener rivalry for the conquest of territory. The circle can become exceedingly vicious—so vicious, indeed, that we may finally go back to the self-sufficing village community; a Europe sparsely populated if the resultant clerical influence is unable to check prudence in the matter of the birth-rate, densely populated to a Chinese or Indian degree if the birth-rate is uncontrolled.

The economic chaos and social disintegration which have

stricken so much of the world have brought a sharp reminder of the primary, the elemental place of food in the catalogue of man's needs, and the relative ease and rapidity with which most else can be jettisoned in our complex civilisation, provided only that the stomach can be filled.

Before the War the towns of Europe were the luxurious and opulent centres; the rural districts were comparatively poor. To-day it is the cities of the Continent that are half-starved or famine-stricken, while the farms are well-fed and relatively opulent. In Russia, Poland, Hungary, Germany, Austria, the cities perish, but the peasants for the most part have a sufficiency. The cities are finding that with the breakdown of the old stability—of the transport and credit systems particularly—they cannot obtain food from the farmers. This process which we now see at work on the Continent is in fact the reversal of our historical development.

As money acquired a stable value and transport and communication became easy and cheap, the manor ceased to be self-contained, to weave its own clothes and make its own implements. But the Russian peasants are proving to-day that if the railroads break down, and the paper money loses its value, the farm can become once more self-sufficing. Better to thresh the wheat with a flail, to weave clothes from the wool, than to exchange wheat and wool for a money that will buy neither cloth nor threshing machinery. But a country-side that weaves its own cloth and threshes its grain by hand is one that has little surplus of food for great cities—as Vienna, Buda-Pest, Moscow, and Petrograd have already discovered.

If England is destined in truth to remain the workshop of that world which produces the food and raw material, then she has indeed a very direct interest in the maintenance of all those processes upon which the pre-war exchange between farm and factory, city and country, depended.[1]

[1] The growing power of the food-producing area and its determination to be independent as far as possible of the industrial centre, is a

The 'farm' upon which the 'factory' of Great Britain depends is the food-producing world as a whole. It does not suffice that the overseas world should merely support itself as it did, say, in the tenth century, but it must be induced by hope of advantage to exchange a surplus for those things which we can deliver to it more economically than it can make them for itself. Because the necessary social and political stability, with its material super-structure of transport and credit, operating trans-nationally, has broken down, much of Europe is returning to its earlier simple life of unco-ordinated production, and its total fertility is being very greatly reduced. The consequent reaction of a diminished food supply for ourselves is already being felt.

3

The 'Prosperity' of Paper Money

It will be said: Does not the unquestioned rise in the standard of wages, despite all the talk of debt, expenditure, unbalanced budgets, public bankruptcy, disprove any theory of a vital connection between a stable Europe and our own prosperity? Indeed, has not the experience of the War discredited much of the theory of the interdependence of nations?

The first few years of the War did, indeed, seem to discredit it, to show that this interdependence was not so vital as had been supposed. Germany seemed for a long time really to be self-supporting, to manage without contact with other peoples. It seemed possible to re-direct the channels of trade with relative ease. It really appeared for a time that the powers of the

---

fact too often neglected in considering the revolutionary movements of Europe. The war of the classes almost everywhere is crossed by another war, that between cities and country. The land-owning countryman, whether peasant or noble, tends to become conservative, clerical, anti-socialist (and anti-social) in his politics and outlook.

Governments could modify fundamentally the normal process of credit almost at will, which would have been about equivalent to the discovery of perpetual motion! Not only was private credit maintained by governmental assistance, but exchanges were successfully 'pegged'; collapse could be prevented apparently with ease. Industry itself showed a similar elasticity. In this country it seemed possible to withdraw five or six million men from actual production, and so organise the remainder as to enable them to produce enough not only to maintain themselves, but the country at large and the army, in food, clothing and other necessaries. And this was accomplished at a standard of living above rather than below that which obtained when the country was at peace, and when the six or seven or eight millions engaged in war or its maintenance were engaged in the production of consumable wealth. It seemed an economic miracle that with these millions withdrawn from production, though remaining consumers, the total industrial output should be very little less than it was before the War.

But we are beginning to see how this miracle was performed, and also what is the truth as to the self-sufficiency of the great nations. As late as the early summer of 1918, when, even after four years of the exhausting drain of war, well-fed German armies were still advancing and gaining victories, and German guns were bombarding Paris (for the first time in the War), the edifice of German self-sufficiency seemed to be sound. But this apparently stalwart economic structure crumbled in a few months into utter ruins and the German population was starving and freezing, without adequate food, fuel, clothing. England has in large measure escaped this result just because her contacts with the rest of the world have been maintained while Germany's have not. These latter were not even re-established at the Armistice; in many respects her economic isolation was more complete after the War than during it. Moreover, because our contacts with the rest of the world are

maintained by shipping, a very great flexibility is given to our extra-national economic relationships. Our lines of communication can be switched from one side of the world to the other instantly, whereas a country whose approaches are by railroads may find its communications embarrassed for a generation if new frontiers render the old lines inapplicable to the new political conditions.

In the first year or so following the Armistice there was a curious contradiction in the prevailing attitude towards the economic situation at home. The newspapers were full of headlines about the Road to Ruin and National Bankruptcy; the Government plainly was unable to make both ends meet; the financial world was immensely relieved when America postponed the payments of debts to her; we were pathetically appealing to her to come and save us; the British sovereign, which for generations has been a standard of value for the world and the symbol of security, dropped to a discount of 20 per cent. in terms of the dollar; our Continental creditors were even worse off; the French could only pay us in a depreciated paper currency, the value of which in terms of the dollar varied between a third and a fourth of what it was before the War; the lira was cheaper still. Yet side by side with this we had stories of a trade boom (especially in textiles and cotton), so great that merchants and manufacturers refused to go to their offices, in order to dodge the flood of orders so vastly in excess of what they could fulfil. Side by side with depreciated paper currency, with public debts so crippling that the Government could only balance its budget by loans which were not successful when floated, the amusement trades flourished as never before. Theatre, music hall, and cinematograph receipts beat all records. There was a greater demand for motor-cars than the trade could supply. The Riviera was fuller than it had ever been before. The working class itself was competing with others for the purchase of luxuries which in the past that class never knew. And while the financial situation made

it impossible, apparently, to find capital for building houses to live in, ample capital was forthcoming wherewith to build cinema palaces. We heard and read of famine almost at our doors, and saw great prosperity around us; read daily of impending bankruptcy—and of high profits and lavish spending; of world-wide unrest and revolution—and higher wages than the workers had ever known.

Complex and contradictory as the facts seemed, the difficulty of a true estimate was rendered greater by the position in which European Governments found themselves placed. These Governments were faced by the necessity of maintaining credit and confidence at almost any cost. They must not, therefore, throw too great an emphasis upon the dark features. Yet the need for economy and production was declared to be as great as it was during the war. To create a mood of seriousness and sober resolution adequate to the situation would involve stressing facts which, in their efforts to obtain loans, internal or external, and to maintain credit, governments were compelled to minimise.

Then, of course, the facts were obscured mainly by the purchasing power created by the manufacture of credit and paper money. Some light is thrown upon this ambiguous situation by a fact which is now so manifest—that this juxtaposition of growing indebtedness and lavish spending, high wages, high profits, active trade, and a rising standard of living, were all things that marked the condition of Germany in the first few years of the War. Industrial concerns showed profits such as they had never shown before; wages steadily rose; and money was plentiful. But the profits were made and the wages were paid in a money that continually declined in value—as ours is declining. The higher consumption drew upon sources that were steadily being depleted—as ours are being depleted. The production was in certain cases maintained by very uneconomic methods: as by working only the best seams in the coal mines, by devoting no effort to the proper upkeep of plant

(locomotives on the railway which ordinarily would go into the repair shop every six weeks were kept running somehow during the whole course of the War). In this sense the people were 'living upon capital'—devoting, that is, to the needs of current consumption energy which should have been devoted to ensuring future production. In another way, they were converting into income what is normally a source of capital. An increase in profits or wages, which ordinarily would have provided a margin, over and above current expenditure, out of which capital for new plant, etc., could have been drawn, was rapidly nullified by a corresponding increase in prices. Loans for the purpose even of capital expenditure involved an inflation of currency which still further increased prices, thus diminishing the value of the capital so provided, necessitating the issue of further loans which had the same effect. And so the vicious circle was narrowed. Even after four years of this kind of thing the edifice had in many respects the outward appearances of prosperity. As late as April, 1918, the German organisation, as we have noted, was still capable of maintaining a military machine which could not only hold its own but compel the retirement of the combined forces of France, Britain, America, and minor Allies. But once the underlying process of disintegration became apparent, the whole structure went to pieces.

It is that unnoticed process of disintegration, preceding the final collapse, which should interest us. For the general method employed by Germany for meeting the consumption of war and disguising the growing scarcity is in many respects the method her neighbours adopted for meeting the consumption of a new standard of life on the basis of less total wealth—a standard which, on the part of the workers, means both shorter hours and a larger share of their produce, and on the part of other classes a larger share of the more expensive luxuries. Like the Germans of 1914-18, we are drawing for current consumption upon the fund which, in a more

healthy situation, would go to provide for renewal of plant and provision of new capital. To 'eat the seed corn' may give an appearance of present plenty at the cost of starvation later.

It is extremely unlikely that there will ever be in England the sudden catastrophic economic collapse which we have witnessed in Russia, Germany, Austria, and Central Europe generally. But we shall none the less be concerned. As the increased wages gained by strikes lose with increasing rapidity their value in purchasing power, thus wiping out the effect of the industrial 'victory,' irritation among the workers will grow. On minds so prepared the Continental experiments in social reconstruction—prompted by conditions immeasurably more acute—will act with the force of hypnotic suggestion. Our Government may attempt to cope with these movements by repression or political devices. Tempers will be too bad and patience too short to give the sound solutions a real chance. And an economic situation, not in itself inherently desperate, may get steadily worse because of the loss of social discipline and of political insight, the failure to realise past expectations, the continuance of military burdens created by external political chaos.

4

The European disintegration: Britain's concern.

What has actually happened in so much of Europe around us ought certainly to prevent any too complacent sense of security. In the midst of this old civilisation are (in Mr. Hoover's calculation) some hundred million folk, who before the War managed to support themselves in fair comfort but are now unable to be truly self-supporting. Yet they live upon the same soil and in the presence of the same natural resources as before the War. Their inability to use that soil and those materials is not due to the mere physical destruction of war, for the famine is worst where there has been no physical de-

struction at all. It is not a lack of labour, for millions are unemployed, seeking work. Nor is it lack of technical or scientific knowledge, upon which (very erroneously) we are apt to look as the one sufficient factor of civilisation; for our technical knowledge in the management of matter is greater even than before the War.

What then is the reason why these millions starve in the midst of potential plenty? It is that they have lost, from certain moral causes examined later in these pages, the capacity to co-ordinate their labour sufficiently to carry on the processes by which alone labour and knowledge can be applied to an exploitation of nature sufficiently complete to support our dense modern populations.

The fact that wealth is not to-day a material which can be taken, but a process which can only be maintained by virtue of certain moral factors, marks a change in human relationship, the significance of which still seems to escape us.

The manor, or even the eighteenth century village, was roughly a self-sufficing unit. It mattered little to that unit what became of the outside world. The manor or village was independent; its people could be cut off from the outside world, could ravage the near parts of it and remain unaffected. But when the development of communication and the discovery of steam turns the agricultural community into coal miners, these are no longer indifferent to the condition of the outside world. Cut them off from the agriculturalists who take their coal or manufactures, or let these latter be unable to carry on their calling, and the miner starves. He cannot eat his coal. He is no longed independent. His life hangs upon certain activities of others. Where his forebears could have raided and ravaged with no particular hurt to themselves, the miner cannot. He is dependent upon those others and has given them hostages. He is no longer 'independent,' however clamorously in his Nationalist oratory he may use that word. He has been forced into a relation of partnership. And how very small is the effect-

iveness of any physical coercion he can apply, in order to exact the services by which he lives, we shall see presently.

This situation of interdependence is of course felt much more acutely by some countries than others—much more by England, for instance, than by France. France in the matter of essential foodstuffs can be nearly self-supporting, England cannot. For England, an outside world of fairly high production is a matter of life and death; the economic consideration must in this sense take precedence of others. In the case of France considerations of political security are apt to take precedence of economic considerations. France can weaken her neighbours vitally without being brought to starvation. She can purchase security at the cost of mere loss of profits on foreign trade by the economic destruction of, say, Central Europe. The same policy would for Britain in the long run spell starvation. And it is this fundamental difference of economic situation which is at the bottom of much of the divergence of policy between Britain and France which has recently become so acute.

This is the more evident when we examine recent changes of detail in this general situation special to England. Before the War a very large proportion of our food and raw material was supplied by the United States. But our economic relationship with that country has been changed as the result of the War. Previous to 1914 we were the creditor and America the debtor nation. She was obliged to transmit to us large sums in interest on investments of British capital. These annual payments were in fact made in the form of food and raw materials, for which, in a national sense, we did not have to give goods or services in return. We are now less in the position of creditor, more in that of debtor. America does not have to transmit to us. Whereas, originally, we did an immense proportion of America's carrying trade, because she had no ocean-going mercantile marine, she has begun to do her own carrying. Further, the pressure of her population upon her food resources is rapidly growing. The law diminishing

returns is in some instances beginning to apply to the production of food, which in the past has been plentiful without fertilisers and under a very wasteful and simple system. And in America, as elsewhere, the standard of consumption, owing to a great increase of the wage standard, has grown, while the standard of production has not always correspondingly increased.

The practical effect of this is to throw England into greater dependence upon certain new sources of food—or trade, which in the end is the same thing. The position becomes clearer if we reflect that our dependence becomes more acute with every increase of our population. Our children now at school may be faced by the problem of finding food for a population of sixty or seventy millions on these islands. A high agricultural productivity on the part of countries like Russia and Siberia and the Balkans might well be then a life and death matter.

Now the European famine has taught us a good deal about the necessary conditions of high agricultural productivity. The co-operation of manufactures—of railways for taking crops out and fertilisers in, of machinery, tools, wagons, clothing —is one of them. That manufacturing itself must be done by division of labour is another: the country or area that is fitted to supply textiles or cream separators is not necessarily fitted to supply steel rails: yet until the latter are supplied the former cannot be obtained. Often productivity is paralysed simply because transport has broken down owing to lack of rolling stock, or coal, or lubricants, or spare parts for locomotives; or because a debased currency makes it impossible to secure food from peasants, who will not surrender it in return for paper that has no value—the manufactures which might ultimately give it value being paralysed. The lack of confidence in the maintenance of the value of paper money, for instance, is rapidly diminishing the food productivity of the soil; peasants will not toil to produce food which they cannot exchange, through the medium of money, for the things which they need —clothing, implements, and so on. This diminishing produc-

tivity is further aggravated by the impossibility of obtaining fertilisers (some of which are industrial products, and all of which require transport), machines, tools, etc. The food producing capacity of Europe cannot be maintained without the full co-operation of the non-agricultural industries—transport, manufactures, coal mining, sound banking—and the maintenance of political order. Nothing but the restoration of all the economic processes of Europe as a whole can prevent a declining productivity that must intensify social and political disorder, of which we may merely have seen the beginning.

But if this interdependence of factory and farm in the production of food is indisputable, though generally ignored, it involves a further fact just as indisputable, and even more completely ignored. And the further fact is that the manufacturing and the farming, neither of which can go on without the other, may well be situated in different States. Vienna starves largely because the coal needed for its factories is now situated in a foreign State—Czecho-Slovakia—which, partly from political motives perhaps, fails to deliver it. Great food producing areas in the Balkans and Russia are dependent for their tools and machinery, for the stability of the money without which the food will not be produced, upon the industries of Germany. Those industries are destroyed, the markets have disappeared, and with them the incentive to production. The railroads of what ought to be food producing States are disorganized from lack of rolling stock, due to the same paralysis of German industry; and so the food production is diminished. Tens of millions of acres outside Germany, whose food the world sorely needs, have been rendered barren by the industrial paralysis of the Central Empires which the economic terms of the Treaty render inevitable.

Speaking of the need of Russian agriculture for German industry, Mr. Maynard Keynes, who has worked out the statistics revealing the relative position of Germany to the rest of Europe, writes:—

'It is impossible geographically and for many other reasons for Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Americans to undertake it—we have neither the incentive nor the means for doing the work on a sufficient scale. Germany, on the other hand, has the experience, the incentive, and to a large extent, the materials for furnishing the Russian peasant with the goods of which he has been starved for the past five years, for reorganising the business of transport and collection, and so for bringing into the world's pool, for the common advantage, the supplies from which we are now disastrously cut off. . . . If we oppose in detail every means by which Germany or Russia can recover their material well-being, because we feel a national, racial, or political hatred for their populations or their governments, we must be prepared to face the consequences of such feelings. Even if there is no moral solidarity between the newly-related races of Europe, there is an economic solidarity which we cannot disregard. Even now, the world markets are one. If we do not allow Germany to exchange products with Russia and so feed herself, she must inevitably compete with us for the produce of the New World. The more successful we are in snapping economic relations between Germany and Russia, the more we shall depress the level of our own economic standards and increase the gravity of our own domestic problems.' [1]

It is not merely the productivity of Russia which is involved. Round Germany as a central support the rest of the European economic system grouped itself, and upon the prosperity and enterprise of Germany the prosperity of the rest of the Continent mainly depended. Germany was the best customer of Russia, Norway, Poland, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, and Austria-Hungary; she was the second best customer of Great Britain, Sweden, and Denmark; and the third best customer of France. She was the largest source of supply to Russia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Switzerland, Italy,

[1] 'The Economic Consequences of the Peace,' pp. 275-277.

Austria-Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria; and the second largest source of supply to Great Britain, Belgium, and France. Britain sent more experts to Germany than to any other country in the world except India, and bought more from her than any other country in the world except the United States. There was no European country except those west of Germany which did not do more than a quarter of their total trade with her; and in the case of Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Poland, the proportion was far greater. To retard or prevent the economic restoration of Germany means retarding the economic reconstruction of Europe.

This gives us a hint of the deep causes underlying the present divergence of French and British policy with reference to the economic reconstruction of Russia and Central Europe. A Britain of sixty or seventy millions faced by the situation with reference to America that has just been touched upon, might well find that the development of the resources of Russia, Siberia, and the Near East—even at the cost of dividing the profits thereof in terms of industrial development with Germany, each supplying that for which it was best suited—was the essential condition of food and social peace. France has no such pre-occupation. Her concern is political: the maintenance of a military predominance on which she believes her political security to depend, an object that might well be facilitated by the political disintegration of Europe even though it involved its economic disintegration.

That brings us to the political factor in the decline in productivity. From it we may learn something of the moral factor, which is the ultimate condition of any co-operation whatsoever.

The relationship of the political to the economic situation is illustrated most vividly, perhaps, in the case of Austria. Mr. Hoover, in testimony given to a United States Senate Committee, has declared bluntly that it is no use talking of loans to Austria which imply future security, if the present

political status is to be maintained, because that status has rendered the old economic activities impossible. Speaking before the Committee, he said:—

'The political situation in Austria I hesitate to discuss, but it is the cause of the trouble. Austria has now no hope of being anything more than a perpetual poorhouse, because all her lands that produce food have been taken from her. This, I will say, was done without American inspiration. If this political situation continues, and Austria is made a perpetual mendicant, the United States should not provide the charity. We should make the loan suggested with full notice that those who undertake to continue Austria's present status must pay the bill. Present Austria faces three alternatives—death, migration, or a complete industrial diversion and re-organization. Her economic rehabilitation seems impossible after the way she was broken up at the Peace Conference. Her present territory will produce only enough food for three months, and she has now no factories which might produce products to be exchanged for food.' [1]

To realise what can really be accomplished by statesmanship that has a soul above such trifles as food and fuel, when it sets its hand to map-drawing, one should attempt to visualise the state of Vienna to-day. Mr A. G. Gardiner, the English journalist, has sketched it thus:—

'To conceive its situation one must imagine London suddenly cut off from all the sources of its life, no access to the sea, frontiers of hostile Powers all round it, every coalfield of Yorkshire or South Wales or Scotland in foreign hands, no citizen able to travel to Birmingham or Manchester without a passport, the mills it had financed in Lancashire taken from it, no coal to burn, no food to eat, and—with its shilling down

[1] *Manchester Guardian*, Weekly Edition, February 6th., 1920.

in value to a farthing—no money to buy raw materials for its labour, industry at a standstill, hundreds of thousands living (or dying) on charity, nothing prospering except the vile exploiters of misery, the traffickers in food, the traffickers in vice. That is the Vienna which the peace criminals have made.

'Vienna was the financial and administrative centre of fifty million of people. It financed textile factories, paper manufacturing, machine works, beet growing, and scores of other industries in German Bohemia. It owned coal mines at Teschen. It drew its food from Hungary. From every quarter of the Empire there came to Vienna the half-manufactured products of the provinces for the finishing processes, tailoring, dyeing, glass-working, in which a vast population found employment.

'Suddenly all this elaborate structure of economic life was swept away. Vienna, instead of being the vital centre of fifty millions of people, finds itself a derelict city with a province of six millions. It is cut off from its coal supplies, from its food supplies, from its factories, from everything that means existence. It is enveloped by tariff walls.'

The writer goes on to explain that the evils are not limited to Austria. In this unhappy Balkanised Society that the peace has created at the heart of Europe, every State is at issue with its neighbours: the Czechs with the Poles, the Hungarians with the Czechs, the Rumanians with the Hungarians, and all with Austria. The whole Empire is parcelled out into quarrelling factions, with their rival tariffs, their passports and their animosities. All free intercourse has stopped, all free interchange of commodities has ceased. Each starves the other and is starved by the other. 'I met a banker travelling from Buda-Pest to Berlin by Vienna and Bavaria. I asked him why he went so far out of his way to get to his goal, and he replied that it was easier to do that than to get through the barbed-wire entanglements of Czecho-Slovakia. There is great hunger

in Bohemia, and it is due largely to the same all-embracing cause. Formerly the Czech peasants used to go to Hungary to gather the harvest and returned with corn as part payment. Now intercourse has stopped, the Hungarian cornfields are without the necessary labour, and the Czech peasant starves at home, or is fed by the American Relief Fund. "One year of peace," said Herr Renner, the Chancellor, to me, "has wrought more ruin than five years of war."'

Mr Gardiner's final verdict [1] does not in essence differ from that of Mr Hoover:—

'It is the levity of mind which has plunged this great city into ruin that is inexplicable. The political dismemberment of Austria might be forgiven. That was repeatedly declared by the Allies not to be an object of the War; but the policy of the French, backed by the industrious propaganda of a mischievous newspaper group in this country, triumphed and the promise was dishonoured. Austria-Hungary was broken into political fragments. That might be defended as a political necessity. But the economic dismemberment was as gratuitous as it was deadly. It could have been provided against if ordinary foresight had been employed. Austria-Hungary was an economic unit, a single texture of the commercial, industrial, and financial interests.' [2]

[1] *Daily News,* June 28th., 1920.

[2] Sir William Goode, British Director of Relief, has said, (*Times* Dec. 6th., 1919):—

'I have myself recently returned from Vienna. I feel as if I had spent ten days in the cell of a condemned murderer who has given up all hope of reprieve. I stayed at the best hotel, but I saw no milk and no eggs the whole time I was there. In the bitter, cold hall of the hotel, once the gayest rendezvous in Europe, the visitors huddled together in the gloom of one light where there used to be forty. They were more like shadows of the Embankment than representatives of the rich. Vienna's world-famous Opera House is packed every afternoon. Why? Women and men go there in order to keep themselves warm, and because they have no work to do.'

He went on:—

'First aid was to hasten peace. Political difficulties combined with

We have talked readily enough in the past of this or that being a 'menace to civilisation.' The phrase has been applied indifferently to a host of things from Prussian Militarism to the tango. No particular meaning was attached to the phrase, and we did not believe that the material security of our civilisation—the delivery of the letters and the milk in the morning, and the regular running of the 'Tubes'—would ever be endangered in our times.

But this is what has happened in a few months. We have seen one of the greatest and most brilliant capitals of Europe, a city completely untouched by the physical devastation of war, endowed beyond most with the equipment of modern technical learning and industry, with some of the greatest factories, medical schools and hospitals of our times, unable to save its children from death by simple starvation—unable, with all that equipment, to provide them each with a little milk and a few ounces of flour every day.

5

The Limits of Political Control

It is sometimes suggested that as political factors (particularly the drawing of frontiers) entered to some extent at least into the present distribution of population, political forces can re-distribute that population. But re-distribution would mean in fact killing.

So to re-direct the vast currents of European industry as to involve a great re-distribution of the population would demand

---

decreased production, demoralisation of railway traffic, to say nothing of actual shortages of coal, food, and finance, had practically paralysed industrial and commercial activity. The bold liberation or creation of areas, without simultaneous steps to reorganise economic life, had so far proved to be a dangerous experiment. Professor Masaryk, the able President of Czecho-Slovakia, put the case in a nutshell when he said: "It is a question of the export of merchandise or of population."'

a period of time so great that during the necessary stoppage of the economic process most of the population concerned would be dead—even if we could imagine sufficient stability to permit of these vast changes taking place according to the naïve and what we now know to be fantastic, programme of our Treaties. And since the political forces—as we shall see—are extremely unstable, the new distribution would presumably again one day undergo a similarly murderous modification.

That brings us to the question suggested in the proposition set out some pages back, how far preponderant political power can ensure or compel those processes by which a population in the position of that of these islands lives.

For, as against much of the foregoing, it is sometimes urged that Britain's concern in the Continental chaos is not really vital, because while the British Isles cannot be self-sufficing, the British Empire can be.

During the War a very bold attempt was made to devise a scheme by which political power should be used to force the economic development of the world into certain national channels, a scheme whereby the military power of the dominant group should be so used as to ensure it a permanent preponderance of economic resources. The plan is supposed to have emanated from Mr Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia, and the Allies (during Mr Asquith's Premiership incidentally) met in Paris for its consideration. Mr Hughes's idea seems to have been to organise the world into economic categories: the British Empire first in order of mutual preference, the Allies next, the neutrals next, and the enemy States last of all. Russia was, of course, included among the Allies, America among the neutrals, the States then Austria-Hungary among the enemies.

One has only to imagine some such scheme having been voted and put into operation, and the modifications which political changes would to-day compel, to get an idea of merely the first of the difficulties of using political and military power, with a basis of separate and competing nationalisms, for

economic purposes. The very nature of military nationalism makes surrender of competition in favour of long continued co-operation for common purposes, a moral impossibility. The foundations of the power are unstable, the wills which determine its use contradictory.

Yet military power must rest upon Alliance. Even the British Empire found that its defence needed Allies. And if the British Empire is to be self-sufficing, its trade canalised into channels drawn along certain political lines, the preferences and prohibitions will create many animosities. Are we to sacrifice our self-sufficiency for the sake of American and French friendship, or risk losing the friendship by preferences designed to ensure self-sufficiency? Yet to the extent that our trade is with countries like North and South America we cannot exercise on its behalf even the shadow of military coercion.

But that is only the beginning of the difficulty.

A suggestive fact is that ever since the population of these islands became dependent upon overseas trade, that trade has been not mainly with the Empire but with foreigners. It is to-day.[1] And if one reflects for a moment upon the present political relationship of the Imperial Government to Ireland, Egypt, India, South Africa, and the tariff and immigration legislation that has marked the economic history of Australia and Canada during the last twenty years, one will get some idea of the difficulty which surrounds the employment of political power for the shaping of an economic policy to subserve any large and long-continued political end.

The difficulties of an imperial policy in this respect do not differ much in character from the difficulties encountered in Paris. The British Empire, too, has its problems of 'Balkanis-

[1] The figures for 1913 are:—

Imports.	From British Possessions	£192,000,000.
	From Foreign Countries	£577,000,000.
Exports.	To British Possessions	£195,000,000.
	To Foreign Countries	£330,000,000.
Re-exports.	To British Possessions	£14,000,000.
	To Foreign Countries	£96,000,000.

ation,' problems that have arisen also from the anti-social element of 'absolute' nationalism. The present Nationalist fermentation within the Empire reveals very practical limits to the use of political power. We cannot compel the purchase of British goods by Egyptian, Indian, or Irish Nationalists. Moreover, an Indian or Egyptian boycott or Irish agitation, may well deprive political domination of any possibility of economic advantage. The readiness with which British opinion has accepted very large steps towards the independence and evacuation of Egypt after having fiercely resisted such a policy for a generation, would seem to suggest that some part of the truth in this matter is receiving general recognition. It is hardly less noteworthy that popular newspapers—that one could not have imagined taking such a view at the time, say, of the Boer war—now strenuously oppose further commitments in Mesopotamia and Persia—and do so on financial grounds. And even where the relations of the Imperial Government with States like Canada or Australia are of the most cordial kind, the impotence of political power for exacting economic advantage has become an axiom of imperial statecraft. The day that the Government in London proposed to set in motion its army or navy for the purpose of compelling Canada or Australia to cease the manufacture of cotton or steel in order to give England a market, would be the day, as we are all aware, of another Declaration of Independence. Any preference would be the result of consent, agreement, debate, contract: not of coercion.

But the most striking demonstration yet afforded in history of the limits placed by modern industrial conditions upon the economic effectiveness of political power is afforded by the story of the attempt to secure reparations, indemnity, and even coal from Germany, and the attempt of the victors, like France, to repair the disastrous financial situation which has followed war by the military seizure of the wealth of a beaten enemy. That story is instructive both by reason of the light which it

throws upon the facts as to the economic value of military power, and upon the attitude of public and statesmen towards these facts.

When, some fifteen years ago, it was suggested that, given the conditions of modern trade and industry, a victor would not in practice be able to turn his military preponderance to economic account even in such a relatively simple matter as the payment of an indemnity, the suggestion was met with all but universal derision. European economists of international reputation implied that an author who could make a suggestion of that kind was just playing with paradox for the purpose of notoriety. And as for newspaper criticism—it revealed the fact that in the minds of the critics it was as simple a matter for an army to 'take' a nation's wealth once military victory had been achieved, as it would be for a big schoolboy to take an apple from a little one.

Incidentally, the history of the indemnity negotiations illuminates extraordinarily the truth upon which the present writer happens so often to have insisted, namely, that in dealing with the economics of nationalism, one cannot dissociate from the problem the moral facts which make the nationalism—without which there would be no nationalisms, and therefore no 'international' economics.

A book by the present author published some fifteen years ago has a chapter entitled 'The Indemnity Futility.' In the first edition the main emphasis of the chapter was thrown on this suggestion: on the morrow of a great war the victor would be in no temper to see the foreign trade of his beaten enemy expand by leaps and bounds, yet by no other means than by an immense foreign trade could a nation pay an indemnity commensurate with the vast expenditure of modern war. The idea that it would be paid in 'money,' which by some economic witchcraft should not involve the export of goods, was declared to be a gross and ignorant fallacy. The traders of the victorious nation would have to face a greatly sharpened competition

from the beaten nation; or the victor would have to go without any very considerable indemnity. The chapter takes the ground that an indemnity is not in terms of theoretical economics an impossibility: it merely indicates the indispensable condition of securing it—the revival of the enemy's economic strength—and suggests that this would present for the victorious nation, not only a practical difficulty of internal politics (the pressure of Protectionist groups) but a grave political difficulty arising out of the theory upon which defence by preponderant isolated national power is based. A country possessing the economic strength to pay a vast indemnity is of potential military strength. And this is a risk your nationalists will not accept.

Even friendly Free Trade critics shook their heads at this and implied that the argument was a reversion to Protectionist illusions for the purpose of making a case. That misunderstanding (for the argument does not involve acceptance of Protectionist premises) seemed so general that in subsequent editions of the book this particular passage was deleted.[1]

[1] The question is dealt with more fully in the last chapter of the 'Addendum' to this book. The chapter of 'The Great Illusion' dealing with the indemnity says: 'The difficulty in the case of a large indemnity is not so much the payment by the vanquished as the receiving by the victor.' (p. 76, 1910 Edition.) Mr Lloyd George (Jan. 28th., 1921) says: 'The real difficulty is in securing payment outside the limits of Germany. . . .The only way Germany can pay is by exports—the difference between German imports and exports . . . If she exports too much for the Allies it means the ruin of their industry.'

Thus the main problem of an indemnity is to secure wealth in exportable form which will not disorganise the victor's trade. Yet so obscured does the plainest fact become in the murky atmosphere of war time that in many of the elaborate studies emanating from Westminster and Paris, as to 'What Germany can pay' this phase of the problem is not even touched upon. We get calculations as to Germany's total wealth in railroads, public buildings, houses, as though these things could be picked up and transported to France or Belgium. We are told that the Allies should collect the revenues of the railroads; the *Daily Mail* wants us to 'take' the income of Herr Stinnes, all without a word as to the form in which this wealth is to *leave Germany*. Are we prepared to take the things made in the factories of Herr Stinnes or other Germans? If not, what do we propose that Germany shall give? Paper marks increased in quantity until they reach just the

It is not necessary now to labour the point, in view of all that has happened in Paris. The dilemma suggested fifteen years ago is precisely the dilemma which confronted the makers of the Peace Treaty; it is, indeed, precisely the dilemma which confronts us to-day.

It applies not only to the Indemnity, Reparations, but to our entire policy, to larger aspects of our relations with the enemy. Hence the paralysis which results from the two mutually exclusive aims of the Treaty of Versailles: the desire on the one hand to reduce the enemy's strength by checking his economic vitality—and on the other to restore the general productivity of Europe, to which the economic life of the enemy is indispensable.

France found herself, at the end of the War, in a desperate financial position and in dire need of all the help which could come from the enemy towards the restoration of her devastated districts. She presented demands for reparation running to vast, unprecedented sums. So be it. Germany then was to be permitted to return to active and productive work, to be permitted to have the iron and the other raw materials necessary for the production of the agricultural machinery, the building material and other sorts of goods France needed. Not the least in the world! Germany was to produce this

---

value of the paper they are printed on? Even to secure coal, we must, as we have seen, give in return food.

If the crux of the situation were really understood by the memorialists who want Germany's pockets searched, their studies would be devoted *not* to showing what Germany might produce under favourable circumstances, which her past has shown to be very great indeed, but what degree of competitive German production Allied industrialists will themselves be ready to face.

"Big business" in England is already strongly averse to the payment of an indemnity, as any conversation in the City or with industrialists readily reveals. Yet it was the suggestion of what has actually taken place which excited the derision of critics a few years ago. Obviously the feasibility of an indemnity is much more a matter of our will than of Germany's, for it depends on what shall be the size of Germany's foreign trade. Clearly we can expand that if we want to. We might give her a preference!

great mass of wealth, but her factories were to remain closed, her rolling stock was to be taken from her, she was to have neither food nor raw materials. This is not some malicious travesty of the attitude which prevailed at the time that the Treaty was made. It was, and to a large extent still is, the position taken by many French publicists as well as by some in England. Mr. Vanderlip, the American banker, describes in his book [1] the attitude which he found in Paris during the Conference in these words: 'The French burn to milk the cow but insist first that its throat must be cut.'

Despite the lessons of the year which followed the signing of the Treaty, one may doubt whether even now the nature of wealth and 'money' has come home to the Chauvinists of the Entente countries. The demand that we should at one and the same time forbid Germany to sell so much as a penknife in the markets of the world and yet compel her to pay us a tribute which could only be paid by virtue of a foreign trade greater than any which she has been able to maintain in the past—these mutually exclusive demands are still made in our own Parliament and Press.

How powerfully the Nationalist fears operate to obscure the plain alternatives is revealed in a letter of M. André Tardieu, written more than eighteen months after the Armistice.

M. Tardieu, who was M. Clemenceau's political lieutenant in the framing of the Treaty, and one of the principal inspirers of the French policy, writing in July, 1920, long after the condition of Europe and the Continent's economic dependence on Germany had become visible, 'warns' us of the 'danger' that Germany may recover unless the Treaty is applied in all its rigour! He says:—

'Remember your own history and remember what the *rat de terre de cousin* which Great Britain regarded with such

[1] 'What Happened to Europe.'

disdain after the Treaty of Frankfurt became in less than forty years. We shall see Germany recover economically, profiting by the ruins she has made in other countries, with a rapidity which will astonish the world. When that day arrives, if we have given way at Spa to the madness of letting her off part of the debt that was born of her crime, no courses will be too strong for the Governments which allowed themselves to be duped. M. Clemenceau always said to British and American statesmen: "We of France understand Germany better than you." M. Clemenceau was right, and in bringing his colleages round to his point of view he did good work for the welfare of humanity. If the work of last year is to be undone, the world will be delivered up to the economic hegemony of Germany before twenty-five years have passed. There could be no better proof than the recent despatches of *The Times* correspondent in Germany, which bear witness to the fever of production which consumes Herr Stinnes and his like. Such evidence is stronger than the biased statistics of Mr Keynes. Those who refuse to take it into account will be the criminals in the eyes of their respective countries.'[1]

Note M. Tardieu's argument. He fears the restoration of Germany industry, *unless* we make her pay the whole indemnity. That is to say, in other words, if we compel Germany to produce during the next twenty-five years something like ten thousand millions worth of wealth *over and above her own needs,* involving as it must a far greater output from her factories, mines, shipyards, laboratories, a far greater development of her railways, ports, canals, a far greater efficiency and capacity in her workers than has ever been known in the past, if that takes place as it must if we are to get an indemnity on the French scale, why, in that case, there will be no risk of Germany's making too great an economic recovery!

The English Press is not much better. It was in Decem-

[1] *Times,* July 3rd., 1920.

ber, 1918, that Professor Starling presented to the British Government his report showing that unless Germany had more food she would be utterly unable to pay any large indemnity to aid in reparations to France. Fully eighteen months later we find the *Daily Mail* (June 18, 1920) rampaging and shouting itself hoarse at the monstrous discovery that the Government have permitted Germans to purchase wheat! Yet the *Mail* has been foremost in insisting upon France's dire need for a German indemnity in order to retore devastated districts. If the *Mail* is really representative of John Bull, then that person is at present in the position of a farmer who at seed-time is made violently angry at the suggestion that grain should be taken for the purpose of sowing the land, and shouts that it is a wicked proposal to take food from the mouths of his children. Although the Northcliffe Press has itself published page advertisements (from the Save the Children Fund) describing the incredible and appalling conditions in Europe, the *Daily Mail* shouts in its leading article: 'Is British Food to go to the Boches?' The thing is in the best war style. 'Is there any reason why the Briton should be starved to feed the German?' asks the *Mail*. And there follows, of course, the usual invective about the submarines, war criminals, the sinking of hospital ships, and the approval by the whole German people of all these crimes.

We get here, as at every turn and twist of our policy, not any recognition of interdependence, but a complete repudiation of that idea, and an assumption, instead, of a conflict of interest. If the children of Vienna or Berlin are to be fed, then it is assumed that it must be at the expense of the children of Paris and London. The wealth of the world is conceived as a fixed quantity, unaffected by any process of co-operation between the peoples sharing the world. The idea is, of course, an utter fallacy. French or Belgian children will have more, not less, if we take measures to avoid European conditions in which the children of Vienna are left to die. If, during

the winter of 1919-1920, French children died from sickness due to lack of fuel, it was because the German coal was not delivered, and the German coal was not delivered because, among other things, of general disorganization of transport, of lack of rolling stock, of underfeeding of the miners, of collapse of the currency, political unrest, uncertainty of the future.

It is one of the contradictions of the whole situation that France herself gives intermittent recognition to the fact of this interdependence. When, at Spa, it became evident that coal simply could not be delivered in the quantities demanded unless Germany had some means of buying imported food, France consented to what was in fact a loan to Germany (to the immense mystification of certain journalistic critics in Paris). One is prompted to ask what those who, before the War so scornfully treated the present writer for throwing doubts upon the feasibility of a post-war indemnity, would have said had he predicted that on the morrow of victory, the victor, instead of collecting a vast indemnity would from the simplest motives of self-protection, out of his own direly depleted store of capital, be advancing money to the vanquished.[1]

The same inconsistency runs through much of our post-war behaviour. The famine in Central Europe has become so appalling that very great sums are collected in Britain and America for its relief. Yet the reduced productivity out of which the famine has arisen was quite obviously deliberately designed, and most elaborately planned by the economic provisions of the Treaty and by the blockades prolonged after the Armistice, for months in the case of Germany and years in the case of Russia. And at the very time that advertisements were appearing in the *Daily Mail* for 'Help to Starving Europe,' and only a few weeks before France consented to advance money for the purpose of feeding Germany, that paper was

[1] The proposal respecting Austria was a loan of 50 millions in instalments of five years.

working up 'anti-Hun stunts' for the purpose of using our power to prevent any food whatsoever going to Boches. It is also a duplication of the American phenomenon already touched upon: One Bill before Congress for the loaning of American money to Europe in order that cotton and wheat may find a market: another Bill before the same Congress designed, by a stiffly increased tariff, to keep out European goods so that the loans can never be repaid.[1]

The experience of France in the attempt to exact coal by the use of military pressure throws a good deal of light upon what is really annexed when a victor takes over territory containing, say, coal; as also upon the question of getting the coal when it has been annexed. 'If we need coal,' wrote a Paris journalist plaintively during the Spa Conference, 'why in heaven's name don't we go and take it.' The implication being that it could be 'taken' without payment, for nothing. But even if France were to occupy the Ruhr and to administer the mines, the plant would have to be put in order, rolling stock provided, railroads restored, and, as France has already

[1] Mr Hoover seems to suggest that their repayment should never take place. To a meeting of Bankers he says:—

'Even if we extend these credits and if upon Europe's recovery we then attempt to exact the payment of these sums by import of commodities, we shall have introduced a competition with our own industries that cannot be turned back by any tariff wall . . . I believe that we have to-day an equipment and a skill in production that yield us a surplus of commodities for export beyond any compensation we can usefully take by way of imported commodities . . . Gold and remittances and services cannot cover this gulf in our trade balance . . . To me there is only one remedy, and that is by the systematic permanent investment of our surplus production in reproductive works abroad. We thus reduce the return we must receive to a return of interest and profit.'

A writer in the *New Republic* (Dec. 29th., 1920.) who quotes this says pertinently enough:—

'Mr Hoover disposes of the principal of our foreign loans. The debtors cannot return it and we cannot afford to receive it back. But the interest and profit which he says we may receive—that will have to be paid in commodities, as the principal would be if it were paid at all. What shall we do when the volume of foreign commodities received in payment of interest and profit becomes very large and our industries cry for protection?'

learned, miners fed and clothed and housed. But that costs money—to be paid as part of the cost of the coal. If Germany is compelled to provide those things—mining machinery, rolling stock, rails, miners' houses and clothing and food—we are confronted with pretty much the same dilemma as we encounter in compelling the payment of an indemnity. A Germany that can buy foreign food is a Germany of restored credit; a Germany that can furnish rolling stock, rails, mining machinery, clothing and housing for miners, is a Germany restored to general economic health—and potentially powerful. That Germany France fears to create. And even though we resort to a military occupation, using forced labour militarily controlled, we are faced by the need of all the things that must still enter in the getting of the coal, from miners' food and houses to plant and steel rails. Their cost must be charged against the coal obtained. And the amount of coal obtained in return for a given outlay will depend very largely, as we know in England to our cost, upon the willingness of the miner himself. Even the measure of resistance provoked in British miners by disputes about workers' control and Nationalisation, has meant a great falling off in output. But at least they are working for their own countrymen. What would be their output if they felt they were working for an enemy, and that every ton they mined might merely result in increasing the ultimate demands which that enemy would make upon their country? Should we get even eighty per cent. of the pre-war output or anything like it?[1] Yet that diminished output

[1] The present writer declines to join in the condemnation of British miners for reduced output. In an ultimate sense (which is no part of the present discussion) the decline in effort of the miner is perhaps justified. But the facts are none the less striking as showing how great the difference of output can be. Figures given by Sir John Cadman, President of the Institute of Mining Engineers a short time ago (and quoted in the *Fortnightly Review* for Oct. 1920.), show that in 1916 the coal production per person employed in the United Kingdom was 263 tons, as against 731 tons in the United States. In 1918 the former amounted to 236 tons, and during 1919 it sank to 197½ tons. In 1915 the coal produced per man per day in this country was 0.98 tons, and

would have to stand the cost of all the permanent charges aforesaid. Would the cost of the coal to France, under some scheme of forced labour, be in the end less than if she were to buy it in the ordinary commercial way from German mines, as she did before the War? This latter method would almost certainly be in economic terms more advantageous. Where is the economic advantage of the military method? This, of course, is only the re-discovery of the old truth that forced or slave labour is more costly than paid labour.

The ultimate explanation of the higher cost of slave labour is the ultimate explanation of the difficulty of using political power for economic ends, of basing our economic security upon military predominance. Here is France, with her old enemy helpless and prostrate. She needs his work for reparations, for indemnities, for coal. To perform that work the prostrate enemy must get upon his feet. If he does, France fears that he will knock her down. From that fear arise contradictory policies, self-stultifying courses. If she overcomes her fear sufficiently to allow the enemy to produce a certain amount of wealth for her, it is extremely likely that more than the amount of that wealth will have to be spent in protecting herself against the danger of the enemy's recovered vitality. Even when wars were less expensive than they are,

---

in America it was 3.91 tons for bituminous coal and 2.19 tons for anthracite. In 1918 the British output figure was 0.80 tons, and the American 3.77 tons for bituminous coal and 2.27 for anthracite. Measured by their daily output, a single American miner does just as much work as do five Englishmen.

The inferiority in production is, of course, 'to some considerable extent' due to the fact that the most easily workable deposits in England are becoming exhausted, while the United States can most easily draw on their most prolific and most easily workable sites. . . .

It is the fact that in our new and favourable coalfields, such as the South Yorkshire area, the men working under the most favourable modern conditions and in new mines where the face is near the shaft, do not obtain as much coal per man employed, as that got by the miners in the country generally under the conditions appertaining forty and fifty years ago.

indemnities were soon absorbed in the increase of armament necessitated by the Treaties which exacted the indemnities.

Again, this is a very ancient story. The victor on the Egyptian vase has his captured enemy on the end of a rope. We say that one is free, the other bond. But as Spencer has shown us, both are bond. The victor is tied to the vanquished: if he should let go the prisoner would escape. The victor spends his time seeing that the prisoner does not escape; the prisoner his time and energy trying to escape. The combined efforts in consequence are not turned to the production of wealth; they are 'cancelled out' by being turned one against another. Both may come near to starvation in that condition if much labour is needed to produce food. Only if they strike a bargain and co-operate will they be in the position each to turn his energy to the best economic account.

But though the story is ancient, men have not yet read it. These pages are an attempt to show why it has not been read.

Let us summarise the conclusions so far reached, namely:—

That predominant political and military power is important to exact wealth is shown by the inability of the Allies to turn their power to really profitable account; notably by the failure of France to alleviate her financial distress by adequate reparations—even adequate quantities of coal—from Germany; and by the failure of the Allied statesmen as a whole, wielding a concentration of power greater perhaps than any known in history to arrest an economic disintegration, which is not only the cause of famine and vast suffering, but is a menace to Allied interest, particularly to the economic security of Britain.

The causes of this impotence are both mechanical and moral. If another is to render active service in the production of wealth for us—particularly services of any technical complexity in industry, finance, commerce—he must have strength for that activity, knowledge, and the instruments. But all those things can be turned against us as means of resistance to our coercion.

To the degree to which we make him strong for our service we make him strong for resistance to our will. As resistance increases we are compelled to use an increasing proportion of what we obtain from him in protecting ourselves against him. Energies cancel each other, indemnities must be used in preparation for the next war. Only voluntary co-operation can save this waste and create an effective combination for the production of wealth that can be utilised for the preservation of life.

6

The Ultimate Moral Factor

The problem is not merely one of foreign politics or international relationship. The passions which obscure the real nature of the process by which men live are present in the industrial struggle also, and—especially in the case of communities situated as is the British—make of the national and international order one problem.

It is here suggested that:—

Into the processes which maintain life within the nation an increasing measure of consent and aquiescence by all parties must enter: physical coercion becomes increasingly impotent to ensure them. The problem of declining production by (*inter alios*) miners, cannot be solved by increasing the army or police. The dictatorship of the proletariat fails before the problem of exacting big crops by the coercion of the peasant or countryman. It would fail still more disastrously before the problem of obtaining food or raw materials from foreigners (without which the British could not live) in the absence of a money of stable value.

One of the most suggestive facts of the post-war situation is that European civilization almost breaks down before one of the simplest of its mechanical problems: that of 'moving

some stones from where they are not needed to the places where they are needed,' in other words before the problem of mining and distributing coal. Millions of children have died in agony in France during this last year or two because there was no coal to transport the food, to warm the buildings. Coal is the first need of our massed populations. Its absence means collapse of everything—of transport, of the getting of food to the towns, of furnishing the machinery and fertilisers by which food can be produced in sufficient quantity. It is warmth, it is clothing, it is light, it is the daily newspaper, it is water, it is communication. All our elaboration of knowledge and science fails in the presence of this problem of 'taking some stones from one heap and putting them on another.' The coal famine is a microcosm of the world's present failure.

But if all those things—and spiritual things also are involved because the absence of material well-being means widespread moral evils—depend upon coal, the getting of the coal itself is dependent upon them. We have touched upon the importance of the one element of sheer goodwill on the part of the miners as a factor in the production of coal; upon the hopelessness of making good its absence by physical coercion. But we have also seen that just as the attempted use of coercion in the international field, though ineffective to exact necessary service or exchange, can and does produce paralysis of the indispensible processes, so the 'power' which the position of the miner gives him is a power of paralysis only.

A later chapter shows that the instinct of industrial groups to solve their difficulties by simple coercion, the sheer assertion of power, is very closely related to the psychology of nationalism, so disruptive in the international field. Bolshevism, in the sense of belief in the effectiveness of coercion, represents the transfer of jingoism to the industrial struggle. It involves the same fallacies. A mining strike can bring the industrial machine to a full stop; to set that machine to work for the feeding of the population—which involves the co-

ordination of a vast number of industries, the purchase of food and raw material from foreigners, who will only surrender it in return for promises to pay which they believe will be fulfilled—means not only technical knowledge, it means also the presence of a certain predisposition to co-operation. This Balkanised Europe which cannot feed itself has all the technical knowledge that it ever had. But its natural units are dominated by a certain temper which make impossible the co-operations by which alone the knowledge can be applied to the available natural resources.

It is also suggestive that the virtual abandonment of the gold standard is playing much the same rôle (rendering visible the inefficiency of coercion) in the struggle between the industrial that it is between the national groups. A union strikes for higher wages and is successful. The increase is granted—and is paid in paper money.

When wages were paid in gold an advance in wages, gained as the result of strike or agitation, represented, temporarily at least, a real victory for the workers. Prices might ultimately rise and wipe out the advantage, but with a gold currency price movements have nothing like the rapidity and range which is the case when unlimited paper money can be printed. An advance in wages paid in paper may mean nothing more than a mere readjustment of symbols. The advance, in other words, can be cancelled by 'a morning's work of the inflationist' as a currency expert has put it. The workers in these conditions can never know whether that which they are granted with the right hand of increased wages will not be taken away by the left hand of inflation.

In order to be certain that they are not simply tricked, the workers must be in a position to control the conditions which determine the value of currency. But again, that means the co-ordination of the most complex economic processes, processes which can only be ensured by bargaining with other groups and with foreign countries.

This problem would still present itself as acutely on the morrow of the establishment of a British Soviet Republic as it presents itself to-day. If the British Soviets could not buy food and raw materials in twenty different centres throughout the world they could not feed the people. We should be blockaded, not by ships, but by the worthlessness of our money. Russia, which needs only an infinitesimal proportion relatively of foreign imports has gold and the thing of absolutely universal need, food. We have no gold—only things which a world fast disintegrating into isolated peasantries is learning somehow to do without.

Before blaming the lack of 'social sense' on the part of striking miners or railwaymen let us recall the fact that the temper and attitude to life and the social difficulties which lie at the bottom of the Syndicalist philosophy have been deliberately cultivated by Government, Press, and Church, during five years for the purposes of war; and that the selected ruling order have shown the same limitation of vision in not one whit less degree.

Think what Versailles actually did and what it might have done.

Here when the Conference met, was a Europe on the edge of famine—some of it over the edge. Every country in the world, including the wealthiest and most powerful, like America, was faced with social maladjustment in one form or another. In America it was an inconvenience, but in the cities of a whole continent—in Russia, Poland, Germany, Austria—it was shortly to mean ill-health, hunger, misery, and agony to millions of children and their mothers. Terms of the study like 'the interruption of economic processes' were to be translated into such human terms as infantile cholera, tuberculosis, typhus, hunger-œdema. These, as events proved, were to undermine the social sanity of half a world.

The acutest statesmen that Europe can produce, endowed with the most autocratic power, proceed to grapple with the

situation. In what way do they apply that power to the problem of production and distribution, of adding to the world's total stock of goods, which nearly every government in the world was in a few weeks to be proclaiming as humanity's first need, the first condition of reconstruction and regeneration?

The Treaty and the policy pursued since the Armistice towards Russia tell us plainly enough. Not only do the political arrangements of the Treaty, as we have seen, ignore the needs of maintaining the machinery of production in Europe[1] but they positively discourage and in many cases are obviously framed to prevent, production over very large areas.

The Treaty, as some one has said, deprived Germany of both the means and the motive of production. No adequate provision was made for enabling the import of food and raw materials, without which Germany could not get to work on the scale demanded by the indemnity claims; and the motive for industry was undermined by leaving the indemnity claims indeterminate.

The victor's passion, as we have seen, blinded him to the indispensable condition of the very demands which he was making. Europe was unable temperamentally to reconcile itself to the conditions of that increased productivity, by which alone it was to be saved. It is this element in the situation—its domination, that is, by an uncalculating popular passion poured out lavishly in support of self-destructive policies—which prompts one to doubt whether these disruptive forces find their roots merely in the capitalist organization of society: still less whether they are due to the conscious machinations of a small group of capitalists. No considerable section of capitalism any where has any interest in the degree of paralysis

[1] Mr J. M. Keynes, 'The Economic Consequences of the Peace,' p. 211, says:—'It is an extraordinary fact that the fundamental economic problem of a Europe starving and disintegrating before their eyes, was the one question in which it was impossible to arouse the interest of the Four.'

that has been produced. Capitalism may have overreached itself by stimulating nationalist hostilities until they have got beyond control. Even so, it is the unseeing popular passion that furnishes the capitalist with his arm, and is the factor of greatest danger.

Examine for a moment the economic manifestation of international hostilities. There has just begun in the United States a clamorous campaign for the denunciation of the Panama Treaty which places British ships on an equality with American. American ships must be exempt from the tolls. 'Don't we own the Canal?' ask the leaders of this campaign. There is widespread response to it. But of the millions of Americans who will become perhaps passionately angry over that matter and extremely anti-British, how many have any shares in any ships that can possibly benefit by the denunciation of the Treaty? Not one in a thousand. It is not an economic motive operating at all.

Capitalism—the management of modern industry by a small economic autocracy of owners of private capital—has certainly a part in the conflicts that produce war. But that part does not arise from the direct interest that the capitalists of one nation as a whole have in the destruction of the trade or industry of another. Such a conclusion ignores the most elementary facts in the modern organisation of industry. And it is certainly not true to say that British capitalists, as a distinct group, were more disposed than the public as a whole to insist upon the Carthaginian features of the Treaty. Everything points rather to the exact contrary. Public opinion as reflected, for instance, by the December, 1918, election, was more ferociously anti-German than capitalists are likely to have been. It is certainly not too much to say that if the Treaty had been made by a group of British—or French—bankers, merchants, shipowners, insurance men, and industrialists, liberated from all fear of popular resentment, the economic life of Central Europe would not have been crushed as it has been.

Assuredly, such a gathering of capitalists would have included groups having direct interest in the destruction of German competition. But it would also have included others having an interest in the restoration of the German market and German credit, and one influence would in some measure have cancelled the other.

As a simple fact we know that not all British capitalists, still less British financiers, *are* interested in the destruction of German prosperity. Central Europe was one of the very greatest markets available for British industry, and the recovery of that market may constitute for a very large number of manufacturers, merchants, shippers, insurance companies, and bankers, a source of immense potential profit. It is a perfectly arguable proposition, to put it at the very lowest, that British 'capitalism' has, as a whole, more to gain from a productive and stable Europe than from a starving and unstable one. There is no reason whatever to doubt the genuineness of the internationalism that we associate with the Manchester School of Capitalist Economics.

But in political nationalism as a force there are no such cross currents cancelling out the hostility of one nation to another. Economically, Britain is not one entity and Germany another. But as a sentimental concept, each may perfectly well be an entity; and in the imagination of John Citizen, in his political capacity, voting on the eve of the Peace Conference, Britain is a triumphant and heroic 'person,' while Germany is an evil and cruel 'person,' who must be punished, and whose pockets must be searched. John has neither the time nor has he felt the need, for a scientific attitude in politics. But when it is no longer a question of giving his vote, but of earning his income, of succeeding as a merchant or shipowner in an uncertain future, he will be thoroughly scientific. When it comes to carrying cargoes or selling cotton goods, he can face facts. And, in the past at least, he knows that he has not sold those materials to a wicked person called

'Germany,' but to a quite decent and human trader called Schmidt.

What I am suggesting here is that for an explanation of the passions which have given us the Treaty of Versailles we must look much more to rival nationalisms than to rival capitalisms; not to hatreds that are the outgrowth of a real conflict of interests, but to certain nationalist conceptions, 'myths,' as Sorel has it. To these conceptions economic hostilities may assuredly attach themselves. At the height of the war-hatred of things German, a shopkeeper who had the temerity to expose German post cards or prints for sale would have risked the sacking of his shop. The sackers would not have been persons engaged in the post card producing trade. Their motive would have been patriotic. If their feelings lasted over the war, they would vote against the admission of German post cards. They would not be moved by economic, still less by capitalistic motives. These motives do enter, as we shall see presently, into the problems raised by the present condition of Europe. But it is important to see at what point and in what way. The point for the moment—and it has immense practical importance—is that the Treaty of Versailles and its economic consequences should be attributed less to capitalism (bad as that has come to be in its total results) than to the pressure of a public opinion that had crystallised round nationalist conceptions.[1]

[1] Incidentally we see nations not yet brought under capitalist organisation (e.g. the peasant nations of the Balkans) equally subject to the hostilities we are discussing.

Bertrand Russell writes (*New Republic*, September 15th., 1920):—

'No doubt commercial rivalry between England and Germany had a great deal to do with causing the war, but rivalry is a different thing from profit-seeking. Probably by combination, English and German capitalists could have made more than they did out of rivalry, but the rivalry was instinctive, and its economic form was accidental. The capitalists were in the grip of nationalist instinct as much as their proletarian 'dupes.' In both classes some have gained by the war, but the universal will to war was not produced by the hope of gain. It was produced by a different set of instincts, one which Marxian psychology fails to recognise adequately. . . .

Here, at the end of 1920, is the British Press still clamouring for the exclusion of German toys. Such an agitation presumably pleases the millions of readers. They are certainly not toymakers or sellers; they have no commercial interest in the matter save that 'their toys will cost them more' if the agitation succeeds. They are actuated by nationalist hostility.

If Germany is not to be allowed to sell even toys, there will be very few things indeed that she can sell. We are to go on with the policy of throttling Europe in order that a nation whose industrial activity is indispensable to Europe shall not become strong. We do not see, it is true, the relation between the economic revival of Europe and the industrial recuperation of Germany; we do not see it because we can be made to feel anger at the idea of German toys for British children so much more readily than we can be made to see the causes which deprive French children of warmth in their schoolrooms. European society seems to be in the position of an ill-disciplined child that cannot bring itself to swallow the medicine that would relieve it of its pain. The passions which have been cultivated in five years of war must be indulged, whatever the ultimate cost to ourselves. The judgment of such a society is swamped in those passions.

The restoration of much of Europe will involve many vast

Men desire power, they desire satisfaction for their pride and their self-respect. They desire victory over their rivals so profoundly that they will invent a rivalry for the unconscious purpose of making a victory possible. All these motives cut across the pure economic motive in ways that are practically important.

There is need of a treatment of political motives by the methods of psycho-analysis. In politics, as in private life, men invent myths to rationalise their conduct. If a man thinks that the only reasonable motive in politics is economic self-advancement, he will persuade himself that the things he wishes to do will make him rich. When he wants to fight the Germans, he tells himself that their competition is ruining his trade. If, on the other hand, he is an 'idealist,' who holds that his politics should aim at the advancement of the human race, he will tell himself that the crimes of the Germans demand their humiliation. The Marxian sees through this latter camouflage, but not through the former.

and complex problems of reconstruction. But here, in the alternatives presented by the payment of a German indemnity, for instance, is a very simple issue: if Germany is to pay, she must produce goods, that is, she must be economically restored; if we fear her economic restoration, then we cannot obtain the execution of the reparation clauses of the Treaty. But that simple issue one of the greatest figures of the Conference cannot face. He has not, eighteen months after the Treaty, emerged from the most elementary confusion concerning it. If the psychology of Nationalism renders so simple a problem insoluble, what will be its effect upon the problem of Europe as a whole?

Again, it may be that shipowners are behind the American agitation and toy manufacturers behind the British. A Coffin Trust might intrigue against measures to prevent a repetition of the influenza epidemic. But what should we say of the fitness for self-government of a people that should lend itself by millions to such an intrigue of Coffin-makers, showing as the result of its propaganda a fierce hostility to sanitation? We should conclude that it deserved to die. If Europe went to war as the result of the intrigues of a dozen capitalists, its civilisation is not worth saving; it cannot be saved, for as soon as the capitalists were removed, its inherent helplessness would place it at the mercy of some other form of exploitation.

Its only hope lies in a capacity for self-management, self-rule, which means self-control. But a few financial intriguers, we are told, have only to pronounce certain words, 'fatherland above all,' 'national honour,' put about a few stories of atrocities, clamour for revenge, for the millions to lose all self-control, to become completely blind as to where they are going, what they are doing, to lose all sense of the ultimate consequences of their acts.

The gravest fact in the history of the last ten years is not the fact of war; it is the temper of mind, the blindness of con-

duct on the part of the millions, which alone, ultimately, explains our policies. The suffering and cost of war may well be the best choice of evils, like the suffering and cost of surgery, or the burdens we assume for a clearly conceived moral end. But what we have seen in recent history is not a deliberate choice of ends with a consciousness of moral and material cost. We see a whole nation demanding fiercely in one breath certain things, and in the next just as angrily demanding other things which make compliance with the first impossible; a whole nation or a whole continent given over to an orgy of hate, retaliation, the indulgence of self-destructive passions. And this collapse of the human mind does but become the more appalling if we accept the explanation that 'wars are caused by capitalism' or 'Junkerthum'; if we believe that six Jew financiers sitting in a room can thus turn millions into something resembling madmen. No indictment of human reason could be more severe.

To assume that millions will, without any real knowledge of why they do it or of the purpose behind the behests they obey, not only take the lives of others and give their own, but turn first in one direction and then in another the flood of their deepest passions of hate and vengeance, just as a little group of mean little men, manipulating mean little interests, may direct, is to argue a moral helplessness and shameful docility on the part of those millions which would deprive the future of all hope of self-government. And to assume that they are *not* unknowing as to the alleged cause—that would bring us to moral phantasmagoria.

We shall get nearer to the heart of our problem if, instead of asking perpetually *'Who* caused the War?' and indicting 'Capitalists' or 'Junkers,' we ask the question: 'What is the cause of that state of mind and temper in the millions which made them on the one side welcome war (as we allege of the German millions), or on the other side makes them acclaim, or impose, blockades, famines,' 'punitive' 'Treaties of Peace?'

Obviously 'selfishness' is not operating so far as the mass is concerned, except of course in the sense that a yielding to the passion of hate is self-indulgence. Selfishness, in the sense of care for social security and well-being, might save the structure of European society. It would bring the famine to an end. But we have what a French writer has called a 'holy and unselfish hate.' Balkan peasants prefer to burn their wheat rather than send it to the famished city across the river. Popular English newspapers agitate against a German trade which is the only hope of necessitous Allies obtaining any considerable reparation from Germany. A society in which each member is more desirous of hurting his neighbour than of promoting his own welfare, is one in which the aggregate will to destruction is more powerful than the will to preservation.

The history of these last years shows with painful clarity that as between groups of men hostilities and hates are aroused very much more easily than any emotion of comradeship. And the hate is a hungrier and more persistent emotion than the comradeship. The much proclaimed fellowship of the Allies, 'cemented by the blood shed on the field,' vanished rapidly. But hate remained and found expression in the social struggle, in fierce repressions, in bickerings, fears, and rancours between those who yesterday fought side by side. Yet the price of survival is, as we have seen, an ever closer cohesion and social co-operation.

And while it is undoubtedly true that the 'hunger of hate'—the actual desire to have something to hate—may so warp our judgment as to make us see a conflict of interest where none exists, it is also true that a sense of conflict of vital interest is a great feeder of hate. And that sense of conflict may well become keener as the problem of man's struggle for sustenance on the earth becomes more acute, as his numbers increase and the pressure upon that sustenance becomes greater.

Once more, as millions of children are born at our very

doors into a world that cannot feed them, condemned, if they live at all, to form a race that will be defective, stunted, unhealthy, abnormal, this question which Malthus very rightly taught our grandfathers to regard as the final and ultimate question of their Political Economy, comes dramatically into the foreground. How can the earth, which is limited, find food for an increase of population which is unlimited?

The haunting anxieties which lie behind the failure to find a conclusive answer to that question, probably affect political decisions and deepen hostilities and animosities even where the reason is ill-formulated or unconscious. Some of us, perhaps, fear to face the question lest we be confronted with morally terrifying alternatives. Let posterity decide its own problems. But such fears, and the motives prompted by them, do not disappear by our refusal to face them. Though hidden, they still live, and under various moral disguises influence our conduct.

Certainly the fears inspired by the Malthusian theory and the facts upon which it is based, have affected our attitude to war; affected the feeling of very many for whom war is not avowedly, as it is openly and avowedly to some of its students, 'the Struggle for Bread.'[1]

The Great Illusion was an attempt frankly to face this ultimate question of the bearing of war upon man's struggle for survival. It took the ground that the victory of one nation

[1] 'If the Englishman sells goods in Turkey or Argentina, he is taking trade from the German, and if the German sells goods in either of these countries—or any other country, come to that—he is taking trade from the Englishman; and the well-being of every inhabitant of the great manufacturing towns, such as London, Paris, or Berlin, is bound up in the power of the capitalist to sell his wares; and the production of manufactured articles has outstripped the natural increase of demand by 67 per cent., therefore new markets must be found for these wares or the existing ones be "forced"; hence the rush for colonies and feverish trade competition between the great manufacturing countries. And the production of manufactured goods is still increasing, and the great cities must sell their wares or starve. Now we understand what trade rivalry really is. It resolves itself, in fact, into the struggle for bread.' (A Rifleman: *'Struggle for Bread.'* p. 54.)

over another, however complete, does not solve the problem; it makes it worse in that the conditions and instincts which war accentuates express themselves in nationalist and racial rivalries, create divisions that embarrass and sometimes make impossible the widespread co-operation by which alone man can effectively exploit nature.

That demonstration as a whole belongs to the pages that follow. But bearing upon the narrower question of war in relation to the world's good, this much is certain:—

If the object of the combatants in the War was to make sure of their food, then indeed is the result in striking contrast with that intention, for food is assuredly more insecure than ever alike for victor and vanquished. They differ only in the degree of insecurity. The War, the passions which it has nurtured, the political arrangements which those passions have dictated, have given us a Europe immeasurably less able to meet its sustenance problem than it was before. So much less able that millions, who before the War could well support themselves by their own labour, are now unable so to do and have to be fed by drawing upon the slender stocks of their conquerors—stocks very much less than when some at least of those conquerors were in the position of defeated peoples.

This is not the effect of the material destruction of war, of the mere battering down of houses and bridges and factories by the soldier.

The physical devastation, heart-breaking as the spectacle of it is, is not the difficult part of the problem, nor quantitatively the most important.[1] It is not the devastated districts that are

[1] Mr J. M. Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, says: 'I do not put the money value of the actual *physical* loss to Belgian property by destruction and loot above £150,000,000 as a *maximum*, and while I hesitate to put yet lower an estimate which differs so widely from those generally current, I shall be surprised if it proves possible to substantiate claims even to this amount. . . . While the French claims are immensely greater, here too, there has been excessive exaggeration, as responsible French statisticians have themselves pointed out. Not above 10 per cent. of the area of France was effectively occupied by the enemy, and not above 4 per cent. lay within the area of sub-

suffering from famine, nor their losses which appreciably diminish the world supply of food. It is in cities in which not a house has been destroyed, in which, indeed, every wheel in every factory is still intact, that the population dies of hunger, and the children have to be fed by our charity. It is the fields over which not a single soldier has tramped that are condemned to sterility because those factories are idle, while the factories are condemned to idleness because the fields are sterile.

The real 'economic argument' against war does not consist in the presentation of a balance sheet showing so much cost and destruction and so much gain. The real argument consists in the fact that war, and still more the ideas out of which it arises, produce ultimately an unworkable society. The physical destruction and perhaps the cost are greatly exaggerated. It is perhaps true that in the material foundations of wealth Britain is as well off to-day as before the War. It is not from lack of technical knowledge that the economic machine works with such friction: that has been considerably increased by the War. It is not from lack of idealism and unselfishness. There has been during the last five years such an outpouring of devoted unselfishness—the very hates have been unselfish—as history cannot equal. Millions have given their lives for the contrary ideals in which they believed. It is sometimes the ideals for which men die that make impossible their life and work together.

The real 'economic argument,' supported by the experience of our victory, is that the ideas which produce war—the fears out of which it grows and the passions which it feeds—produce a state of mind that ultimately renders impossible the co-operation by which alone wealth can be produced and life maintained. The use of our power or our knowledge for the purpose of subduing Nature to our service depends upon the prevalence

---

stantial devastation. . . . In short, it will be difficult to establish a bill exceeding £500,000,000 for *physical and material* damage in the occupied and devastated areas of Northern France.' (pp. 114-117.)

of certain ideas, ideas which underlie the 'art of living together.' They are something apart from mere technical knowledge which war, as in Germany, may increase, but which can never be a substitute for this 'art of living together.' (The arms, indeed, may be the instruments of anarchy, as in so much of Europe to-day).

The War has left us a defective or perverted social sense, with a group of instincts and moralities that are disintegrating Western society, and will, unless checked, destroy it.

These forces, like the 'ultimate art' which they have so nearly destroyed, are part of the problem of economics. For they render a production of wealth adequate to welfare impossible. How have they arisen? How can they be corrected? These questions will form an integral part of the problems here dealt with.

CHAPTER II

THE OLD ECONOMY AND THE POST-WAR STATE

THIS chapter suggests the following:—

The trans-national processes which enabled Europe to support itself before the War, were based mainly on private exchanges prompted by the expectation of individual advantage. They were not dependent upon political power. (The fifteen millions for whom German soil could not provide, lived by trade with countries over which Germany had no political control, as a similar number of British live by similar non-political means.)

The old individualist economy has been largely destroyed by the State Socialism introduced for war purposes; the Nation, taking over individual enterprise, became trader and manufacturer in increasing degree. The economic clauses of the Treaty, if enforced, must prolong this tendency, rendering a large measure of such Socialism permanent.

The change may be desirable. But if co-operation must in future be less as between individuals for private advantage, and much more as between *nations,* Governments acting in an economic capacity, the political emotions of nationalism will play a much larger rôle in the economic processes of Europe. If to Nationalist hostilities as we have known them in the past, is to be added the commercial rivalry of nations now converted into traders and capitalists, we are likely to have not a less but more quarrelsome world, unless the fact of interdependence is much more vividly realised than in the past.

The facts of the preceding chapter touching the economic chaos in Europe, the famine, the debauchery of the currencies, the collapse of credit, the failure to secure indemnities, and particularly the remedies of an international kind to which we are now being forced, all confirm what had indeed become pretty evident before the War, namely, that much of Europe lives by virtue of an international, or, more correctly, a trans-national economy. That is to say, there are large populations that cannot live at much above a coolie standard unless there is a considerable measure of economic co-operation across frontiers. The industrial countries, like Britain and Germany, can support their populations only by exchanging their special products and services—particularly coal, iron, manufactures, ocean carriage—for food and raw materials; while more agricultural countries like Italy and even Russia, can maintain their full food-producing capacity only by an apparatus of railways, agricultural machinery, imported coal and fertilisers, to which the industry of the manufacturing area is indispensable.

That necessary international co-operation had, as a matter of fact, been largely developed before the War. The cheapening of transport, the improvement of communication, had pushed the international division of labour very far indeed. The material in a single bale of clothes would travel half round the world several times, and receive the labour of half a dozen nationalities, before finally reaching its consumer. But there was this very significant fact about the whole process; Governments had very little to do with it, and the process did not rest upon any clearly defined body of commercial right, defined in a regular code or law. One of the greatest of all British industries, cotton spinning, depended upon access to raw material under the complete control of a foreign State, America. (The blockade of the South in the War of Secession proved how absolute was the dependence of a main British industry upon the political decisions of a foreign Government). The mass of contradictory uncertainties relating to rights of neutral

trade in war-time, known as International Law, furnished no basis of security at all. It did not even pretend to touch the source—the right of access to the material itself.

That right, and the international economy that had become so indispensable to the maintenance of so much of the population of Western Europe, rested upon the expectation that the private owner of raw materials—the grower of wheat or cotton, or the owner of iron ore or coal-mines—would continue to desire to sell those things, would always, indeed, be compelled so to do, in order to turn them to account. The main aim of the Industrial Era was markets—to sell things. One heard of 'economic invasions' before the War. This did not mean that the invader took things, but that he brought them—for sale. The modern industrial nation did not fear the loss of commodities. What it feared was their receipt. And the aid of Governments was mainly invoked, not for the purpose of preventing things leaving the country, but for the purpose of putting obstacles in the way of foreigners bringing commodities into the country. Nearly every country had 'Protection' against foreign goods. Very rarely did we find countries fearing to lose their goods and putting on export duties. Incidentally such duties are forbidden by the American Constitution.

Before the War it would have seemed a work of supererogation to frame international regulations to protect the right to buy: all were searching for buyers. In an economic world which revolved on the expectation of individual profit, the competition for profit kept open the resources of the world.

Under that system it did not matter much, economically, what political administration—provided always that it was an orderly one—covered the area in which raw materials were found, or even controlled ports and access to the sea. It was in no way indispensable to British industry that its most necessary raw material—cotton, say—should be under its own control. That industry had developed while the sources of the material were in a foreign State. Lancashire did not need to

'own' Louisiana. If England had 'owned' Louisiana, British cotton-spinners would still have had to pay for the cotton as before. When a writer declared before the War that Germany dreamed of the conquest of Canada because she needed its wheat wherewith to feed her people, he certainly overlooked the fact that Germany could have had the wheat of Canada on the same conditions as the British who 'owned' the country—and who certainly could not get it without paying for it.

It was true before the War to write:—

'Co-operation between nations has become essential for the very life of their peoples. But that co-operation does not take place as between States at all. A trading corporation called "Britain" does not buy cotton from another corporation called "America." A manufacturer in Manchester strikes a bargain with a merchant in Louisiana in order to keep a bargain with a dyer in Germany, and three, or a much larger number of parties, enter into virtual, or perhaps actual, contract, and form a mutually dependent economic community (numbering, it may be, with the work-people in the group of industries involved, some millions of individuals)—an economic entity so far as one can exist which does not include all organised society. The special interests of such a community may become hostile to those of another community, but it will almost certainly not be a "national" one, but one of a like nature, say a shipping ring or groups of international bankers or Stock Exchange speculators. The frontiers of such communities do not coincide with the areas in which operate the functions of the State. How could a State, say Britain, act on behalf of an economic entity such as that just indicated? By pressure against America or Germany? But the community against which the British manufacturer in this case wants pressure exercised is not "America" or "Germany"—both want it exercised against the shipping ring or the speculators or the bankers who in part are British. If Britain injures America or Germany as a whole,

she injures necessarily the economic entity which it was her object to protect.'[1]

This line of reasoning is no longer valid, for it was based upon a system of economic individualism, upon a distinction between the functions proper to the State and those proper to the citizen. This individualist system has been profoundly transformed in the direction of national control by the measures adopted everywhere for the purposes of war; a transformation that the confiscatory clauses of the Treaty and the arrangements for the payment of the indemnity help to render permanent. While the old understanding or convention has been destroyed—or its disappearance very greatly accelerated—by the Allies, no new one has so far been established to take its place. To that fact we must ascribe much of the economic paralysis that has come upon the world.

I am aware, of course, that the passage I have quoted did not tell the whole story; that already before the War the power of the political State was being more and more used by 'big business'; that in China, Mexico, Central America, the Near East, Morocco, Persia, Mesopotamia, wherever there was undeveloped *and disorderly* territory, private enterprise was exercising pressure upon the State to use its power to ensure sources of raw material or areas for the investment of capital. That phase of the question is dealt with at greater length elsewhere.[2] But the actual (whatever the potential) economic importance of the territory about which the nations quarrelled was as yet, in 1914, small; the part taken by Governments in the control and direction of international trade was negligible. Europe

[1] *The Foundations of International Policy* pp. xxiii-xxiv.
It is true, of course, that Governments were for their armies and navies and public departments considerable purchasers in the international market. But the general truth of the distinction here made is unaffected. The difference in degree, in this respect, between the pre-war and post-war state in so great as to make a difference of kind. The dominant motive for State action has been changed.

[2] See Addendum and also the authors' *War and the Workers.* (National Labour Press). pp. 29-50.

lived by processes that went on without serious obstacle across frontiers. Little States, for instance, without Colonies (Scandinavia, Switzerland) not only maintained a standard of living for their people quite as high as that in the great States, but maintained it moreover by virtue of a foreign trade relatively as considerable. And the forces which preserved the international understanding by which that trade was carried on were obviously great.

It was not true, before the War, to say that Germany had to expand her frontiers to feed her population. It is true that with her, as with us, her soil did not produce the food needed for the populations living on it; as with us, about fifteen millions were being fed by means of trade with territories which politically she did not 'own,' and did not need to 'own'—with Russia, with South America, with Asia, with our own Colonies. Like us Germany was turning her coal and iron into bread. The process could have gone on almost indefinitely, so long as the coal and iron lasted, as the tendency to territorial division of labour was being intensified by the development of transport and invention. (The pressure of the population on the food resources of these islands was possibly greater under the Heptarchy than at present, when they support forty-five millions.) Under the old economic order conquest meant, not a transfer of wealth from one set of persons to another—for the soil of Alsace, for instance, remained in the hands of those who had owned it under France—but a change of administration. The change may have been as unwarrantable and oppressive as you will, but it did not involve economic strangulation of the conquered peoples or any very fundamental economic change at all. French economic life did not wither as the result of the changes of frontier in 1872, and French factories were not shut off from raw material, French cities were not stricken with starvation as the result of France's defeat. Her economic and financial recovery was extraordinarily rapid; her financial position a year or two after the War was sounder

than that of Germany. It seemed, therefore, that if Germany, of all nations, and Bismarck, of all statesmen, could thus respect the convention which after war secured the immunity of private trade and property, it must indeed be deeply rooted in international comity.

Indeed, the 'trans-national' economic activities of individuals, which had ensued so widespread an international economy, and the principle of the immunity of private property from seizure after conquest, had become so firmly rooted in international relationship as to survive all the changes of war and conquest. They were based on a principle that had received recognition in English Treaties dating back to the time of Magna Carta, and that had gradually become a convention of international relationship.

At Versailles the Germans pointed out that their country was certainly not left with resources to feed its population. The Allies replied to that, not by denying the fact—to which their own advisers, like Mr Hoover, have indeed pointedly called attention—but as follows:—

'It would appear to be a fundamental fallacy that the political control of a country is essential in order to procure a reasonable share of its products. Such a proposal finds no foundation in economic law or history.'[1]

In making their reply the Allies seemed momentarily to have overlooked one fact—their own handiwork in the Treaty.

Before the War it would have been a true reply. But the Allies have transformed what were, before the War, dangerous fallacies into monstrous truths.

President Wilson has described the position of Germany under the Treaty in these terms:—

'The Treaty of Peace sets up a great Commission, known as the Reparations Commission. . . . That Reparation Commission

[1] Note of May 22, 1919.

can determine the currents of trade, the conditions of credit, of international credit; it can determine how much Germany is going to buy, where it is going to buy, and how it is going to pay for it' [1]

In other words, it is no longer open to Germany, as the result of guarantees of free movement accorded to individual traders, to carry on that process by which before the War she supported herself. Individual Germans cannot now, as heretofore, get raw materials by dealing with foreign individuals, without reference to their nationality. Germans are now, in fact, placed in the position of having to deal through their State, which in turn deals with other States. To buy wheat or iron, they cannot as heretofore go to individuals, to the grower or mine-owner, and offer a price; the thing has to be done through Governments. We have come much nearer to a condition in which the States do indeed 'own' (they certainly control) their raw material.

The most striking instance is that of access to the Lorraine iron, which before the War furnished three-fourths of the raw material of Germany's basic industry. Under the individualist system, in which 'the buyer is king' in which efforts were mainly directed to finding markets, no obstacle was placed on the export of iron (except, indeed, the obstacle to the acquisition by French citizens of Lorraine iron set up by the French Government in the imposition of tariffs). But under the new order, with the French State assuming such enormously increased economic functions, the destination of the iron will be determined by political considerations. And 'political considerations,' in an order of international society in which the security of the nation depends, not upon the collective strength of the whole society, but upon its relative strength as against rival units, mean the deliberate weakening of rivals. Thus, no longer will the desire

[1] Speech of September 5, 1919. From report in Philadelphia Public Ledger, Sept. 6.

of private owners to find a market for their wares be a guarantee of the free access of citizens in other States to those materials. In place of a play of factors which did, however clumsily, ensure in practice general access to raw materials, we have a new order of motives; the deliberate desire of States, competing in power, owning great sources of raw material, to deprive rival States of the use of them.

That the refusal of access will not add to the welfare of the people of the State that so owns these materials, that, indeed, it will inevitably lower the standard of living in all States alike, is certainly true. But so long as there is no real international society organised on the basis of collective strength and co-operation, the motive of security will override considerations of welfare. The condition of international anarchy makes true what otherwise need not be true, that the vital interests of nations are conflicting.

Parenthetically, it is necessary to say this: the time may have come for the destruction of the older order. If the individualist order was that which gave us Armageddon, and still more, the type of mind which Armageddon and the succeeding 'peace' revealed, then the present writer, for one, sheds no tears over its destruction. In any case, a discussion of the intrinsic merits, social and moral, of socialism and individualism respectively, would to-day be quite academic. For those who profess to stand for individualism are the most active agents of its destruction. The Conservative Nationalists, who oppose the socialisation of wealth and yet advocate the conscription of life; oppose Nationalisation, yet demand the utmost military preparedness in an age when effective preparation for war means the mobilisation particularly of the nation's industrial resources; resent the growing authority of the State, yet insist that the power of the National State shall be such as to give it everywhere domination; do, indeed, demand omelets without eggs, and bricks not only without straw but without clay.

A Europe of competing military nationalisms means a

Europe in which the individual and all his activities must more and more be merged in his State for the purpose of that competition. The process is necessarily one of progressively intense socialisation; and the war measures carried it to very great lengths indeed. Moreover, the point to which our attention just now should be directed, is the difference which distinguishes the process of change within the State from that which marks the change in the international field. Within the State the old method is automatically replaced by the new (indeed nationalisation is mostly the means by which the old individualism is brought to an end); between nations, on the other hand, no organised socialistic internationalism replaces the old method which is destroyed. The world is left without any settled international economy.

Let us note the process of destruction of the old economy.

In July, 1914, the advocacy of economic nationalisation or Socialism would have been met with elaborate arguments from perhaps nine average Englishmen out of ten, to the effect that control or management of industries and services by the Government was impossible, by reason of the sheer inefficiency which marks Governmental work. Then comes the War, and an efficient railway service and the co-ordination of industry and finance to national ends becomes a matter of life and death. In this grave emergency, what policy does this same average Englishman, who has argued so elaborately against State control, and the possibility of governments ever administering public services, pursue? Almost as a matter of course, as the one thing to be done, he clamours for the railways and other public services to be taken over by the Government, and for the State to control the industry, trade, and finance of the country.

Now it may well be that the Socialist would deny that the system which obtained during the War was Socialism, and would say that it came nearer to being State Capitalism than State Socialism; the individualist may argue that the methods would never be tolerated as a normal method of national life.

But when all allowances are made the fact remains that when our need was greatest we resorted to the very system which we had always declared to be the worst from the point of view of efficiency. As Sir Leo Chiozza Money, in sketching the history of this change, which he has called 'The Triumph of Nationalisation,' says: 'The nation won through the unprecedented economic difficulties of the greatest War in history by methods which it had despised. National organisation triumphed in a land where it had been denied.' In this sense the England of 1914-1920 was a Socialist England; and it was a Socialist England by common consent.

This fact has an effect on the moral outlook not generally realised.

For very many, as the War went on and increasing sacrifices of life and youth were demanded, new light was thrown upon the relations of the individual to the State. A whole generation of young Englishmen were suddenly confronted with the fact that their lives did not belong to themselves, that each owed his life to the State. But if each must give, or at least risk, everything that he possessed, even life itself, were others giving or risking what they possessed? Here was new light on the institution of private property. If the life of each belongs to the community, then assuredly does his property. The Communist State which says to the citizen, 'You must work and surrender your private property or you will have no vote,' asks, after all, somewhat less than the *bourgeois* Military State which says to the conscript, 'Fight and give your person to the State or we will kill you.' For great masses of the British working-classes conscription has answered the ethical problem involved in the confiscation of capital. The Eighth Commandment no longer stands in the way, as it stood so long in the case of a people still religiously minded and still feeling the weight of Puritan tradition.

Moreover, the War showed that the communal organisation of industry could be made to work. It could 'deliver the goods'

if those goods were, say, munitions. And if it could work for the purposes of war, why not for those of peace? The War showed that by co-ordinated and centralised action the whole economic structure can without disaster be altered to a degree that before the War no economist would have supposed possible. We witnessed the economic miracle mentioned in the last chapter, but worth recalling here. Suppose before the War you had collected into one room all the great capitalist economists in England, and had said to them: 'During the next few years you will withdraw from normal production five or six millions of the best workers. The mere residue of the workers will be able to feed, clothe, and generally maintain those five or six millions, themselves, and the country at large, at a standard of living on the whole as high, if not higher, than that to which the people were accustomed before those five or six million workers were withdrawn.' If you had said that to those capitalist economists, there would not have been one who would have admitted the possibility of the thing, or regarded the forecast as anything but rubbish.

Yet that economic miracle has been performed, and it has been performed thanks to Nationalisation and Socialism, and could not have been performed otherwise.

However, one may qualify in certain points this summary of the outstanding economic facts of the War, it is impossible to exaggerate the extent to which the revelation of economic possibilities has influenced working-class opinion.

To the effect of this on the minds of the more intelligent workers, we have to add another psychological effect, a certain recklessness, inseparable from the conditions of war, reflected in the workers' attitude towards social reform.

Perhaps a further factor in the tendency towards Communism is the habituation to confiscation which currency inflation involves. Under the influence of war contrivances States have learned to pay their debts in paper not equivalent in value to the gold in which the loan was made: whole classes

53090

of bondholders have thus been deprived of anything from one-half to two-thirds of the value of their property. It is confiscation in its most indiscriminate and sometimes most cruel form. *Bourgeois* society has accepted it. A socialistic society of to-morrow may be tempted to find funds for its social experiments in somewhat the same way.

Whatever weight we may attach to some of these factors, this much is certain: not only war, but preparation for war, means, to a much greater degree than it has ever meant before, mobilisation of the whole resources of the country—men, women, industry. This form of 'nationalisation' cannot go on for years and not affect the permanent form of the society subjected to it. It has affected it very deeply. It has involved a change in the position of private property and individual enterprise that since the War has created a new cleavage in the West. The future of private property which was before the War a theoretical speculation, has become within a year or two, and especially, perhaps, since the Bolshevist Revolution in Russia, a dominating issue in European social and political development. It has subjected European society to a new strain. The wearing down of the distinction between the citizen and the State, and the inroads upon the sacro-sanctity of private property and individual enterprise, make each citizen much more dependent upon his State, much more a part of it. Control of foreign trade so largely by the State has made international trade less a matter of processes maintained by individuals who disregarded their nationality, and more a matter of arrangement between States, in which the non-political individual activity tends to disappear. We have here a group of forces which has achieved a revolution, a revolution in the relationship of the individual European to the European State, and of the States to one another.

The socialising and communist tendencies set up by measures of industrial mobilisation for the purposes of the War, have been carried forward in another sphere by the economic

terms of the Treaty of Versailles. These latter, if even partly carried into effect, will mean in very large degree the compulsory socialisation, even communisation, of the enemy States. Not only the country's foreign trade, but much of its internal industry must be taken out of the hands of private traders or manufacturers. The provisions of the Treaty assuredly help to destroy the process upon which the old economic order in Europe rested.

Let the reader ask himself what is likely to be the influence upon the institution of private property and private commerce of a Treaty world-wide in its operation, which will take a generation to carry out, which may well be used as a precedent for future settlements between States (settlements which may include very great politico-economic changes in the position of Egypt, Ireland, and India), and of which the chief economic provisions are as follows:—

'It deprives Germany of nearly the whole of her overseas marine. It banishes German sovereignty and economic influence from all her overseas possessions, and sequestrates the private property of Germans in those places, in Alsace-Lorraine, and in all countries within Allied jurisdiction. It puts at the disposal of the Allies all German financial rights and interests, both in the countries of her former Allies and in the States and territories which have been formed out of them. It gives the Reparations Commission power to put its finger on any great business or property in Germany and to demand its surrender. Outside her own frontiers Germany can be stripped of everything she possesses, and inside them, until an impossible indemnity has been paid to the last farthing, she can truly call nothing her own.

'The Treaty inflicts on an Empire built up on coal and iron the loss of about one-third of her coal supplies, with such a heavy drain on the scanty remainder as to leave her with an annual supply of only 60 million tons, as against the pre-war

production of over 190 million tons, and the loss of over three-quarters of her iron ore. It deprives her of all effective control over her own system of transport; it takes the river system of Germany out of German hands, so that on every International Committee dealing with German waters, Germans are placed in a clear minority. It is as though the Powers of Central Europe were placed in a majority on the Thames Conservancy or the Port of London Authority. Finally, it forces Germany for a period of years to concede "most favoured nation" treatment to the Allies, while she receives no such reciprocal favour in return.'

This wholesale confiscation of private property[1] is to take place without the Allies affording any compensation to the individuals expropriated, and the proceeds will be employed, first, to meet private debts due to Allied nationals from any German nationals, and, second, to meet claims due from Austrian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, or Turkish nationals. Any balance may either be returned by the liquidating power direct to Germany, or retained by them. If retained, the proceeds must be transferred to the Reparations Commission for Germany's

[1] In German East Africa we have a case in which practically the whole of the property in land was confiscated. The whole European population were evicted from the farms and plantations—many, of course, representing the labour of a lifetime—and deported. A visitor to the colony describes it as an empty shell, its productivity enormously reduced. In contradistinction, however, one welcomes General Smuts's statement in the Union House of Assembly in regard to the Government's intentions as to German property. He declared that the balance of nine millions in the hands of the Custodian after claims for damages had been recovered, would not be paid to the Reparations Commission, as this would practically mean confiscation. The Government would take the nine millions, plus interest, as a loan to South Africa for thirty years at four per cent. While under the Peace Treaty they had the right to confiscate all private property in South-West Africa, they did not intend to avail themselves of those rights. They would leave private property alone. As to the concessions, if the titles to these were proved, they would also be left untouched. The statement of the South African Government's intentions, which are the most generous of any country in the world, was received with repeated cheers from all sections of the House.

credit in the Reparations account. Note, moreover, how the identification of a citizen with his State is carried forward by the discrimination made against Germans in overseas trade. Heretofore there were whole spheres of international trade and industrial activity in which the individual's nationality mattered very little. It was a point in favour of individual effort, and, incidentally, of international peace. Under the Treaty, whereas the property of Allied nationals within German jurisdiction reverts to Allied ownership on the conclusion of peace, the property of Germans within Allied jurisdiction is to be retained and liquidated as described above, with the result that the whole of German property over a large part of the world can be expropriated, and the large properties now within the custody of Public Trustees and similar officials in the Allied countries may be retained permanently. In the second place, such German assets are chargeable, not only with the liabilities of Germans, but also, if they run to it, with 'payment of the amounts due in respect of claims by the nationals of such Allied or Associated Power with regard to their property, rights, and interests in the territory of other Enemy Powers,' as, for example, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Austria. This is a remarkable provision, which is naturally non-reciprocal. In the third place, any final balance due to Germany on private account need not be paid over, but can be held against the various liabilities of the German Government.[1] The effective operation of these articles is guaranteed by the delivery of deeds, titles, and information.

[1] Since the above lines were written the following important announcement has appeared (according to *The Times* of October 26th., 1920.) in the *Board of Trade Journal* of October 21st. :—

'H. M. Government have informed the German Government that they do not intend to exercise their rights under paragraph 18 of Annex II to Part VIII of the Treaty of Versailles, to seize the property of German nationals in this country in case of voluntary default by Germany. This applies to German property in the United Kingdom or under United Kingdom control, whether in the form of bank balances, or in that of goods in British bottoms, or of goods sent to this country for sale.

It will be noted how completely the Treaty returns to the Tribal conception of a collective responsibility, and how it wipes away the distinction heretofore made in International Law, between the civilian citizen and the belligerent Government. An Austrian who has lived and worked in England or China or Egypt all his life, and is married to an English woman and has children who do not speak a word of German, who is no more responsible for the invasion of Belgium than an Icelander or a Chinaman, finds that the savings of his lifetime left here in the faith of British security, are confiscated under the Treaty in order to satisfy the claims of France or Japan. And, be it noted, whenever attention is directed to what the defenders of the Treaty like to call its 'sternness' (as when it deprives Englishborn women and their children of their property) we are invited to repress our misgiving on that score in order to contemplate the beauty of its 'justice,' and to admire the inexorable accuracy with which reward and punishment are distributed. It is the standing retort to critics of the Treaty: they forget its 'justice.'[1]

'It has already been announced that German property, rights, and interests acquired since the publication of the General Licence permitting the resumption of trade with Germany (i.e. since July 12th., 1919), are not liable to retention under Art. 297 of the Peace Treaty, which gives the Allied and Associated Powers the right to liquidate all German property, rights, and interests within their territories at the date of the coming into force of the Treaty.'

This announcement has called forth strong protests from France and from some quarters in this country, to which the British Government has rejoined by a semi-official statement that the concession has been made solely on account of British commercial interests. The incident illustrates the difficulty of waiving even permissive powers under the Treaty, although the exercise of those powers would obviously injure British traders. Moreover, the Reparations (Recovery) Act, passed in March 1921, appears to be inconsistent with the above announcement.

[1] A point that seems to have been overlooked is the effect of this Treaty on the arrangements which may follow changes in the political status of, say, Egypt or India or Ireland. If some George Washington of the future were to apply the principles of the Treaty to British property, the effects might be far-reaching.

A *Quarterly Review* critic (April 1920) says of these clauses of the Treaty (particularly Article 297b.):—

How far this new tendency is likely to go towards a reassertion of the false doctrine of the complete submergence of the individual in the State, the erection of the 'God-State' which at the beginning we declared to be the main moral cause of the War and set out to destroy, will be discussed later. The point for the moment is that the enforcement of this part of the Treaty, like other parts, will go to swell communistic tendencies. It will be the business of the German State to maintain the miners who are to deliver the coal under the Treaty, the workers in the shipyards who are to deliver the yearly toll of ships. The intricate and elaborate arrangements for 'searching Germany's pockets' for the purpose of the indemnity mean the very strictest Governmental control of private trade in Germany, in many spheres its virtual abolition. All must be done through the Government in order that the conditions of the Treaty may be fulfilled. Foreign trade will be no longer the individual enterprise of private citizens. It will, by the order of the Allies, be a rigidly controlled Governmental function, as President Wilson reminded us in the passage quoted above.

To a lesser degree the same will be true of the countries receiving the indemnity. Mr. Lloyd George promises that it will not be paid in cheap goods, or in such a way as to damage home industries. But it must be paid in some goods: ships, dyes, or (as some suggest) raw materials. Their distribution to private industry, the price that these industries

'We are justified in regarding this policy with the utmost apprehension, not only because of its injustice, but also because it is likely to form precedents of a most mischievous character in the future. If, it will be said, the Allied Governments ended their great war for justice and right by confiscating private property and ruining those unfortunate individuals who happened to have investments outside their own country, how can private wealth at home complain if a Labour Government proposes to confiscate private property in any business which it thinks suitable for "nationalisation"? Under another provision the Reparations Commission is actually allowed to demand the surrender of German properties and German enterprises in *neutral* countries. This will be found in Article 235, which "introduces a quite novel principle in the collection of indemnities."'

shall pay, must be arranged by the receiving Government. This inevitably means a prolongation of the State's intervention in the processes of private trade and industry. Nor is it merely the disposal of the indemnity in kind which will compel each Allied Government to continue to intervene in the trade and industry of its citizens. The fact that the Reparations Commission is, in effect, to allocate the amount of ore, cotton, shipping, Germany is to get, to distribute the ships and coal which she may deliver, means the establishment of something resembling international rationing. The Governments will, in increasing degree, determine the amount and direction of trade.

The more thoroughly we 'make Germany pay,' the more State-controlled do we compel her (and only to a lesser extent ourselves) to become. We should probably regard a standard of life in Germany very definitely below that of the rest of Western Europe, as poetic justice. But it would inevitably set up forces, both psychological and economic, that make not only for State-control—either State Socialism or State Capitalism—but for Communism.

Suppose we did our work so thoroughly that we took absolutely all Germany could produce over and above what was necessary for the maintenance of the physical efficiency of her population. That would compel her to organise herself increasingly on the basis of equality of income: no one, that is, going above the line of physical efficiency and no one falling below it.

Thus, while British, French, and American anti-socialists are declaring that the principle enunciated by the Russian Government, that all trade must be through the Soviet, is one which will prove most mischievous in its example, it is precisely that principle which increasingly, if the Treaty is enforced, they will in fact impose upon a great country, highly organised, of great bureaucratic efficiency, far more likely by its training and character to make the principle a success.

This tendency may be in the right direction or the wrong one. The point is that no provision has been made to meet the condition which the change creates. The old system permitted the world to work under well-defined principles. The new regimen, because it has not provided for the consequences of the changes it has provoked, condemns a great part of Europe to economic paralysis which must end in bitter anarchic struggles unless the crisis is anticipated by constructive statesmanship.

Meantime the continued coercion of Germany will demand on the part of the Western democracies a permanent maintenance of the machine of war, and so a perpetuation of the tendency, in the way already described, towards a militarised Nationalisation.

The resultant 'Socialism' will assuredly not be of the type that most Socialists (among whom, incidentally, the present writer counts himself) would welcome. But it will not necessarily be for that reason any less fatal to the workable transnational individualism.

Moreover, military nationalisation presupposes international conflict, if not perpetually recurrent war; presupposes, that is, first, an inability to organise a stable international economy indispensable to a full life for Europe's population; and, secondly, an increasing destructiveness in warfare—self-destruction in terms of European Society as a whole. 'Efficiency' in such a society would be efficiency in suicide.

CHAPTER III

NATIONALITY, ECONOMICS, AND THE ASSERTION OF RIGHT

THE change noted in the preceding chapter raises certain profound questions of Right. These may be indicated as follows:—

By our political power we *can* create a Europe which, while not assuring advantage to the victor, deprives the vanquished of means of existence. The loss of both ore and coal by the Central Powers might well make it impossible for their future populations to find food. What are they to do? Starve? To disclaim responsibility is to claim that we are entitled to use our power to deny them life.

This 'right' to starve foreigners can only be invoked by invoking the concept of nationalism. 'Our nation first.' But the policy of placing life itself upon a foundation of preponderant force instead of mutually advantageous co-operation, compels statesmen perpetually to betray the principle of nationality; not only directly (as in the case of the annexation of territory, economically necessary, but containing peoples of alien nationality), but indirectly; for the resistance which our policy (of denying means of subsistence to others) provokes, makes preponderance of power the condition of survival. All else must give way to that need.

Might cannot be pledged to Right in these conditions. If our power is pledged to Allies for the purposes of the Balance (which means, in fact, preponderance), it cannot be used

against them to enforce respect for (say) nationality. To turn against Allies would break the Balance. To maintain the Balance of Power we are compelled to disregard the moral merits of an Ally's policy (as in the case of the promise to the Czar's Government not to demand the independence of Poland). The maintenance of a Balance (*i.e.* preponderance) is incompatible with the maintenance of Right. There is a conflict of obligation.

Before the War, a writer in the *National Review,* desiring to show the impossibility of obviating war by any international agreement, took the example of the conflict with Germany and put the case as follows:—

'Germany *must* go to war. Every year an extra million babies are crying out for more room, and as the expansion of Germany by peaceful means seems impossible, Germany can only provide for those babies at the cost of potential foes.

'This . . . it cannot be too often repeated, is not mere envious greed, but stern necessity. The same struggle for life and space which more than a thousand years ago drove one Teutonic wave after another across the Rhine and the Alps, is now once more a great compelling force. . . . This aspect of the case may be all very sad and very wicked, but it is true. . . . Herein lies the ceaseless and ruinous struggle for armaments, and herein for France lies the dire necessity of linking her foreign policy with that of powerful allies.'

'And so,' adds the writer, 'it is impossible and absurd to accept the theory of Mr. Norman Angell.'

Now that theory was, not that Germany and others would not fight—I was very insistent indeed that[1] unless there was a change in European policy they would—but that war, however it might end, would not solve the question. And that con-

[1] See quotations in Addendum.

clusion at least, whatever may be the case with others, is proved true.

For we have had war; we have beaten Germany; and those million babies still confront us. The German population and its tendency to increase is still there. What are we going to do about it? The War has killed two million out of about seventy million Germans; it killed very few of the women. The subsequent privations of the blockade certainly disposed of some of the weaker among both women and children. The rate of increase may in the immediate future be less. It was declining before the War as the country became more prosperous, following in this what seems to be a well-established rule: the higher the standard of civilisation the more does the birth-rate decline. But if the country is to become extremely frugal and more agricultural, this tendency to decline is likely to be checked. In any case the number of mouths to be fed will not have been decreased by war to the same extent that the resources by which they might have been fed have been decreased.

What do we propose to Germany, now that we have beaten her, as the means of dealing with those million babies? Professor Starling, in a report to the British Government,[1] suggests emigration:—

'Before the War Germany produced 85 per cent. of the total food consumed by her inhabitants. This large production was only possible by high cultivation, and by the plentiful use of manure and imported feeding stuffs, means for the purchase of these being furnished by the profits of industry. . . . The loss to Germany of 40 per cent. of its former coal output must diminish the number of workers who can be maintained. The great increase in German population during the last twenty-five years was rendered possible only by exploiting the agricultural possibilities of the soil to the greatest

[1] Cmd. 280 (1919), p. 15.

possible extent, and this in its turn depended on the industrial development of the country. The reduction by 20 per cent. in the productive area of the country, and the 40 per cent. diminution in the chief raw material for the creation of wealth, renders the country at present over-populated, and it seems probable that within the next few years many million (according to some estimates as many as fifteen million) workers and their families will be obliged to emigrate, since there will be neither work nor food for them to be obtained from the reduced industries of the country.'

But emigration where? Into Russia? The influence of Germans in Russia was very great even before the War. Certain French writers warn us frantically against the vast danger of Russia's becoming a German colony unless a cordon of border States, militarily strong, is created for the purpose of keeping the two countries apart. But we should certainly get a Germanisation of Russia from the inside if five or ten or fifteen million Germans were dispersed therein and the country became a permanent reservoir for those annual million babies.

And if not Russia, where? Imagine a migration of ten or fifteen million Huns throughout the world—a dispersion before which that of the Jews and of the Irish would pale. We know how the migration from an Ireland of eight millions that could not feed itself has reacted upon our politics and our relations with America. What sort of foreign problems are we going to bequeath to our children if our policy forces a great German migration into Russia, or the Balkans, or Turkey?

This insistent fact of a million more or less of little Huns being born into the world every year remains. Shall we suggest to Germany that she must deal with this problem as the thrifty householder deals with the too frequent progeny of the family cat?

Or shall we do just nothing, and say that it is not our affair; that as we have the power over the iron of Lorraine and Morocco, over the resources of Africa and Asia, over the ocean highways of the world, we are going to see that that power, naval and military, is used to ensure abundance for ourselves and our friends; that as for others, since they have not the power, they may starve? *Vae victis* indeed![1]

Just note what is involved. This war was fought to destroy the doctrine that might is right. Our power, we say, gives *us* access to the wealth of the world; others shall be excluded. Then we are using our power to deny to some millions the most elemental of all rights, the right to existence. By the economic use of our military power (assuming that military power is as effective as we claim) we compel some millions to choose between war and penury or starvation; we give to war, in their case, the justification that it is on behalf of the bread of their children, their livelihood.

Let us compare France's position. Unlike the German, the French population has hardly increased at all in recent generations. In the years immediately preceding the War, indeed, it showed a definite decline, a tendency naturally more marked since the War. This low birth-rate has greatly concerned French statesmen, and remedies have been endlessly discussed, with no result. The causes are evidently very deep-rooted indeed. The soil which has been inherited by this declining population is among the richest and most varied in the world,

[1] The dilemma is not, of course, as absolute, as this query would suggest. What I am trying to make perfectly clear here is the *kind* of problem that faces us rather than the precise degree of its difficulty. My own view is that after much suffering especially to the children, and the reduction during a generation or two, perhaps, of the physical standard of the race, the German population will find a way round the sustenance difficulty. For one thing, France needs German coke quite as badly as Germany needs French ore, and this common need may be made the basis of a bargain. But though Germany may be able to surmount the difficulties created for her by her victors, it is those difficulties which will constitute her grievance, and will present precisely the kind, if not the degree, of injustice here indicated.

producing in the form of wines, brandies, and certain other luxuries, results which can be duplicated nowhere else. It stretches almost into the sub-tropics. In addition, the nation possesses a vast colonial empire—in Algeria, Tunis, Morocco (which include some of the greatest food-growing areas in the world), Madagascar, Equatorial Africa, Cochin-China; an empire managed, by the way, on strongly protectionist principles.

We have thus on the one side a people of forty millions with no tendency to increase, mainly not industrial (because not needing to be), possessing undeveloped areas capable, in their food and mineral resources (home and colonial), of supporting a population very many times its size. On the other hand is a neighbouring group, very much larger, and rapidly increasing, occupying a poorer and smaller territory. It is unable to subsist at modern standards on that territory without a highly-developed industry. The essential raw materials have passed into the hands of the smaller group. The latter on grounds of self-defence, fearing to be outnumbered, may withhold those materials from the larger group; and its right so to do is to be unquestioned.

Does any one really believe that Western Society could remain stable, resting on moral foundations of this kind? Can one disregard primary economic need in considering the problem of preserving the Europe of 'free and independent national states' of Mr. Asquith's phrase?[1]

[1] One very commonly sees the statement that France had no adequate resources in iron ore before the War. This is an entire mistake, as the Report of the Commission appointed by the Minister of Munitions to visit Lorraine (issued July, 1919), points out (p. 11.):—'Before the War the resources of Germany of iron ore were 3,600,000,000 tons and those of France 3,300,000,000.' What gave Germany the advantage was the possession not of greater ore resources than France, but of coal suitable for furnace coke, and this superiority in coal will still remain even after the Treaty, although the paralysis of transport and other indispensable factors may render the superiority valueless. The report just quoted says:—'It is true that Germany will want iron ore from Lorraine (in 1913 she took 14,000,000 tons from Briey and 18,500,000 tons from Lorraine), but she will not be so entirely dependent upon

If things are left where this Treaty leaves them, then the militarist theories which before were fallacies will have become true. We can no longer say that peoples as distinct from imperialist parties have no interest in conquest. In this new world of to-morrow—this 'better and more stable world'—the interests of peoples themselves will be in deadly conflict. For an expanding people it will be a choice between robbery of neighbours' territory and starvation. Re-conquest of Lorraine will become for the Germans not a matter of hurt pride or sentiment, but a matter of actual food need, a need which will not, like hurt pride, diminish with the lapse of time, but increase with the growth of the population. On the side of war, then, truly we shall find 'the human stomach and the human womb.'

The change is a deeper reversion than we seem to realise. Even under feudalism the means of subsistence of the people, the land they cultivated, remained as before. Only the lords were changed—and one lord was very like another. But where, under modern industrial economy, titles to property in indispensable raw materials can be cancelled by a conqueror and become the State property of the conquering nation, which enforces the right to distribute them as it pleases, whole populations may find themselves deprived of the actual means of supporting themselves on the territory that they occupy.

---

this one source of supply as the Lorrarine works will be upon Germany for coke, unless some means are provided to enable Lorraine to obtain coke from elsewhere, or to produce her own needs from Saar coal and imported coking coal.' The whole report seems to indicate that the *mise en valeur* of France's new 'property' depends upon supplies of German coal—to say nothing of the needs of a German market and the markets depending on that market. As it is, the Lorraine steel works are producing nothing like their full output because of the inability of Germany to supply furnace coke, owing largely to the Westphalian labour troubles and transport disorganisation. Whether political passion will so far subside as to enable the two countries to come to a bargain in the matter of exchange of ore or basic pig-iron for furnace coke, remains to be seen. In any case one may say that the ore-fields of Lorraine will only be of value to France provided that much of their product is returned to Germany and used for the purpose of giving value to German coal.

We shall have set up a disruptive ferment working with all the force of the economic needs of 50 or 100 million virile folk to bring about once more some vast explosion. Europe will once more be living on a volcano, knowing no remedy save futile efforts to 'sit on the lid.'

The beginnings of the attempt are already visible. Colonel Repington points out that owing to the break up of Russia and Austria, and the substitution for these two powerful States of a large number of small, independent ones likely to quarrel among themselves, Germany will be the largest and most cohesive of all the European Continental nations, relatively stronger than she was before the War. He demands in consequence, that not only France, but Holland and Belgium, be extended to the Rhine, which must become the strategic frontier of civilisation against barbarism. He says there can be no sort of security otherwise. He even reminds us that it was Rome's plan. (He does not remind us that if it had notably succeeded then we should hardly be trying it again two thousand years later.) The plan gives us, in fact, this prospect: the largest and most unified racial block in Europe will find itself surrounded by a number of lesser States, containing German minorities, and possessing materials indispensable to Germany's economic life, to which she is refused peaceful access in order that she may not become strong enough to obtain access by force; an attempt which she will be compelled to make because peaceful access is denied to her. Our measures create resistance; that resistance calls forth more extreme measures; those measures further resistance, and so on. We are in the thick once more of Balance of Power, strategic frontiers, every element of the old stultifying statecraft against which all the Allies—before the Armistice—made flaming protest.

And when this conflict of rights—each fighting as he believes for the right to life—has blazed up into passions that transcend all thought of gain or advantage, we shall be asked

somewhat contemptuously what purpose it serves to discuss so cold a thing as 'economics' in the midst of this welter.

It won't serve any purpose. But the discussion of economics before it had become a matter for passion might have prevented the conflict.

The situation has this complication—and irony: Increasing prosperity, a higher standard of living, sets up a tendency prudentially to check increase of population. France, and in hardly less degree even new and sparsely populated countries like Australia, have for long shown a tendency to a decline of the rate of increase. In France, indeed, as has already been mentioned, an absolute decrease had set in before the War. But as soon as this tendency becomes apparent, the same nationalist who invokes the menace of over-population as the justification for war, also invokes nationalism to reverse the tendency which would solve the over-population problem. This is part of the mystic nature of the nationalist impulse. Colonel Roosevelt is not the only warlike nationalist who has exhausted the resources of invective to condemn 'race suicide' and to enjoin the patriotic duty of large families.

We may gather some idea of the morasses into which the conception of nationalism and its 'mystic impulses' may lead us when applied to the population problem by examining some current discussions of it. Dr Raymond Pearl, of John Hopkins University, summarises certain of his conclusions thus:—

'There are two ways which have been thought of and practised, by which a nation may attempt to solve its problem of population after it has become very pressing and after the effects of internal industrial development and its creation of wealth have been exhausted. These are respectively the methods of France and Germany. By consciously controlled methods, France endeavoured, and on the whole succeeded, in keeping her birth-rate at just such a delicate balance with the death-rate as to make the population nearly stationary. Then any industrial

developments simply operated to raise the standard of living of those fortunate enough to be born. France's condition, social economy, and political, in 1914 represented, I think, the results of about the maximum efficiency of what may be called the birth-control method of meeting the problem of population.

'Germany deliberately chose the other plan of meeting the problem of population. In fewest words the scheme was, when your population pressed too hard upon subsistence, and you had fully liquidated the industrial development asset, to go out and conquer some one, preferably a people operating under the birth-control population plan, and forcibly take his land for your people. To facilitate this operation a high birth-rate is made a matter of sustained propaganda, and in every other possible way encouraged. An abundance of cannon fodder is essential to the success of the scheme.' [1]

A word or two as to the facts alleged in the foregoing. We are told that the two nations not only followed respectively two different methods, but that it was in each case a deliberate national choice, supported by organised propaganda. 'By consciously controlled methods, France,' we are told, 'endeavoured' to keep her birth-rate down. The fact is, of course, that all the conscious endeavours of 'France,' if by France is meant the Government, the Church, the learned bodies, were in the exactly contrary direction. Not only organised propaganda, but most elaborate legislation, aiming through taxation at giving a preference to large families, has for a generation been industriously urging an increase in the French population. It has notoriously been a standing dish in the menu of the reformers and uplifters of nearly every political party. What we obviously have in the case of France is not a decision made by the nation as a corporate body and the Government representing it, but a tendency which their deliberate

[1] From the summary of a series of lectures on the *Biology of Death*, as reported in the *Boston Herald* of December 19th., 1920.

decision, as represented by propaganda and legislation, has been unable to check.[1]

In discussing the merits of the two plans, Dr Pearl goes on:—

'Now the morals of the two plans are not at issue here. Both are regarded, on different grounds to be sure, as highly immoral by many people. Here we are concerned only with actualities. There can be no doubt that in general and in the long run the German plan is bound to win over the birth-control plan, if the issue is joined between the two and only the two, and its resolution is military in character. . . . So long as there are on the earth aggressively-minded peoples who from choice deliberately maintain a high birth-rate, no people can afford to put the French solution of the population problem into operation unless they are prepared to give up, practically at the asking, both their national integrity and their land.'

Let us assume, therefore, that France adopts the high birth-rate plan. She, too, will then be compelled, if the plan has worked out successfully, 'to get out and conquer some one.' But that some one will also, for the same reasons, have been following the plan of high birth-rate. What is then to happen? A competition in fecundity as a solution of the excess population problem seems inadequate. Yet it is inevitably prompted by the nationalist impulse.

Happily the general rise in the standard of life itself furnishes a solution. As we have seen, the birth-rate is, within certain limits, in inverse ratio to a people's prosperity. But

[1] A recent book on the subject, summing up the various recommendations made in France up to 1918 for increasing the birth-rate is *La Natalité: ses Lois Economiques et Psychologiques*, by Gaston Rageot. The present writer remembers being present ten years before the War at a Conference at the Sorbonne on this subject. One of the lecturers summarised all the various plans that had been tried to increase the birth-rate. 'They have all failed,' he concluded, 'and I doubt if anything remains to be done.' And one of the savants present added: 'Except to applaud.'

again, nationalism, by preventing the economic unification of Europe, may well stand in the way of that solution also. It checks the tendencies which would solve the problem.

A fall in the birth-rate, as a concomitant of a rising standard of living, was beginning to be revealed in Germany also before the War.[1] If now, under the new order, German industrialism is checked and we get an agricultural population compelled by circumstances to a standard of life not higher than that of the Russian *moujik,* we may perhaps also be faced by a revival of high fertility in mystic disregard of the material means available for the support of the population.

There is a further point.

Those who have dealt with the world's food resources point out that there are great sources of food still undeveloped. But the difficulties do not arise from a total shortage. They arise from a mal-distribution of population, coupled with the fact that as between nations the Ten Commandments—particularly the eighth—do not run. By the code of nationalism we have no obligation towards starving foreigners. A nation may seize territory which it does not need, and exclude from it those who direly need its resources. While we insist that internationalism is political atheism, and that the only doctrine fit for red-blooded people is what Colonel Roosevelt called 'intense Nationalism,' intense nationalism means, in economic practice, the attempt,

[1] Mr William Harbutt Dawson gives the figures as follows:—

'The decline in the birth-rate was found to have become a settled factor in the population question. . . . The birth-rate for the whole Empire reached the maximum figure in 1876, when it stood at 41.0 per 1000 of the population. . . . Since 1876 the movement has been steadily downward, with the slightest possible break at the beginning of the 'nineties. . . . Since 1900 the rate has decreased as follows:—

1900	35.6 per 1000.	1904	34.1 per 1000.
1901	35.7 per "	1905	33.0 per "
1902	35.1 per "	1906	33.1 per "
1903	33.9 per "		

(*The Evolution of Modern Germany.* p. 309)

even at some cost, to render the political unit also the economic unit, and as far as possible self-sufficing.

It serves little purpose, therefore, to point out that one or two States in South America can produce food for half the world, if we also create a political tradition which leads the patriotic South American to insist upon having his own manufactures, even at cost to himself, so that he will not need ours. He will achieve that result at the cost of diminishing his production of food. Both he and the Englishman will be poorer, but according to the standard of the intense nationalist, the result should be a good one, though it may confront many of us with starvation, just as the intense nationalism of the various nations of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe actually results in famine on soil fully capable, before the War, of supporting the population, and capable of supporting still greater populations if natural resources are used to the best advantage. It is political passions, anti-social doctrines, and the muddle, confusion, and hostility that go therewith which are the real cause of the scarcity.

And that may forecast the position of Europe as a whole to-morrow: we may suffer starvation for the patriotic joy of seeing foreigners — Boche or Bolshevist — suffer in still greater degree.

Given the nationalist conception of a world divided into completely distinct groups of separate corporate bodies, entities so different that the binding social ties between them (laws, in fact) are impossible of maintenance, there must inevitably grow up pugnacities and rivalries, creating a general sense of conflict that will render immeasurably difficult the necessary co-operation between the peoples, the kind of co-operation which the Treaty of Versailles has, in so large degree, deliberately destroyed. Whether the hostility comes, in the first instance, from the 'herd,' or tribal, instinct, and develops into a sense of economic hostility, or whether the hostility arises from the conviction that there exists a conflict

of interest, the result is pretty much the same. I happen to have put the case elsewhere in these terms:—

If it be true that since the world is of limited space, we must fight one another for it, that if our children are to be fed others must starve, then agreement between peoples will be for ever impossible. Nations will certainly not commit suicide for the sake of peace. If this is really the relationship of two great nations, they are, of course, in the position of two cannibals, one of whom says to the other: 'Either I have got to eat you, or you have got to eat me. Let's come to a friendly agreement about it.' They won't come to a friendly agreement about it. They will fight. And my point is that not only would they fight if it really were true that the one had to kill and eat the other, but they would fight as long as they believed it to be true. It might be that there was ample food within their reach—out of their reach, say, so long as each acted alone, but within their reach if one would stand on the shoulders of the other ('this is an allegory'), and so get the fat cocoa-nuts on the higher branches. But they would, nevertheless, be cannibals so long as each believed that the flesh of the other was the only source of food. It would be that mistake, not the necessary fact, which would provoke them to fight.

When we learn that one Balkan State refuses to another a necessary raw material, or access over a railroad, because it prefers the suffering of that neighbour to its own welfare, we are shocked and talk about primitive and barbarous passions. But are we ourselves—Britain or France—in better state? The whole story of the negotiations about the indemnity and the restoration of Europe shows that we are not. Quite soon after the Armistice the expert advisers of the British Government urged the necessity, for the economic safety of the Allies themselves, of helping in the restoration of Germany. But they also admitted that it was quite hopeless to go to Parliament with any proposal to help Germany. And even when one

gets a stage further and there is general admission 'in the abstract' that if France is to secure reparations, Germany must be fed and permitted to work, the sentiment of hostility stands in the way of any specific measure.

We are faced with certain traditions and moralities, involving a psychology which, gathering round words like 'patriotism,' deprives us of the emotional restraint and moral discipline necessary to carry through the measures which intellectually we recognise to be indispensable to our country's welfare.

We thus see why it is impossible to speak of international economics without predicating the nation as a concept. In the economic problems of nations or States, one is necessarily dealing not only with economic facts, but with political facts: a political entity in its economic relations (before the War inconsiderable, but since the War very great); group consciousness; the interests, or what is sometimes as important, the supposed interests of this group or area as distinct from that; the moral phenomena of nationalism—group preferences or prejudices, herd instinct, tribal hostility. All this is part of the economic problem in international politics. Protection, for instance, is only in part a problem of economics; it is also a problem of political preferences: the manufacturer who is content to face the competition of his own countrymen, objects to facing that of foreigners. Political conceptions are part of the economic problem when dealing with nations, just as primary economic need must be taken into account as part of the cause of the conflict of nationalisms.

One very commonly hears the argument: 'What is the good of discussing economic forces in relation to the conflict of Europe when our participation, for instance, in the War, was in no way prompted by economic considerations?'

Our motive may not have been economic, yet the cause of the War may very well have been mainly economic. The sentiment of nationality may be a stronger motive in European politics

than any other. The chief menace to nationality may none the less be economic need.

While it may be perfectly true that Belgians, Serbs, Poles, Bohemians, fought from motives of nationality, it may also be true that the wars which they were compelled to fight had an economic cause.

If the desire of Germany or Austria for undeveloped territory had anything to do with that thrust towards the Near East in the way of which stood Serbian nationality, then economic causes *had* something to do with compelling Serbia and Belgium to fight for their nationality. Owing to the pressure of the economic need or greed of others, we are still concerned with economic forces, though we may be actuated only by the purest nationalism: the economic pressure of others is obviously part of the problem of our national defence. And if one examines in turn the chief problems of nationality, one finds in almost every case that any aggression by which it may be menaced is prompted by the need, or assumed need, of other nations for mines, ports, access to the sea (warm water or other), or for strategic frontiers to defend those things.

Why should the desire of one people to rule itself, to be free, be thwarted by another making exactly the same demands? In the case of the Germans we ascribe it to some special and evil lust peculiar to their race and training. But the Peace has revealed to us that it exists in every people, every one.

A glance at the map enables us to realise readily enough why a given State may resist the 'complete independence' of a neighbouring territory.

Here, on the borders of Russia, for instance, are a number of small States in a position to block the access of the population of Russia to the sea; in a position, indeed, by their control of certain essential raw materials, to hold up the development of a hundred million people, very much as the robber barons of the Rhine held up the commerce of that waterway. No powerful Russia, Bolshevik or Czarist, will permanently recog-

nise the absolute right of a little State, at will (at the bidding, perhaps, of some military dictator, who in South American fashion may have seized its Government), to block her access to the 'highways of the world.' 'Sovereignty and independence' —absolute sovereignty over its own territory, that is—may well include the 'right' to make the existence of others intolerable. Ought any nation to have such a right? Like questions are raised in the case of the States that once were Austria. They have achieved their complete freedom and independence. Some of the results are dealt with in the first chapter. In some cases the new States are using their 'freedom, sovereignty, and independence' for the purpose of worsening a condition of famine and economic paralysis that spells indescribable suffering for millions of completely innocent folk.[1]

So far, the new Europe is economically less competent than the old. The old Austrian grouping, for instance, made possible a stable and orderly life for fifty million people. A Mittel Europa, with its Berlin-Bagdad designs, would, whatever its dangers otherwise, have given us a vastly greater area of co-ordinated production, an area approaching that of the United States; it would have ensured the effective co-operation of populations greatly in excess of those of the United States. Whatever else might have happened, there would have been no destruction by famine of the populations concerned if some such plan of organised production had materialised. The old Austria at least ensured for the children physical health and education, for the peasants work in their fields, in security; and

[1] Conversely it may be said that the economic position of the border States becomes impossible unless the greater States are orderly. In regard to Poland, Mr Keynes remarks: 'Unless her great neighbours are prosperous and orderly, Poland is an economic impossibility, with no industry but Jew-baiting.'

Sir William Goode (the British Director of Relief) states that he found 'everywhere never-ending vicious circles of political paradox and economic complication, with consequent paralysis of national life and industry. The new States of repartitioned Europe seem not only incapable of maintaining their own economic life, but also either unable or unwilling to help their neighbours.' (Cmd. 521 (1920), p. 6.)

although denial of full national rights was doubtless an evil thing, it still left free a vast field of human activities—those of the family, of productive labour, of religion, music, art, love, laughter.

A Europe of small 'absolute' nationalisms threatens to make these things impossible. We have no standard, unhappily, by which we can appraise the moral loss and gain in the exchange of the European life of July, 1914, for that which Europe now faces and is likely to face in the coming years. But if we cannot measure or weigh the moral value of absolute nationalism, the present situation does enable us to judge in some measure the degree of security achieved for the principle of nationality, and to what extent it may be menaced by the economic needs of the millions of Europe. And one is impelled to ask whether nationality is not threatened by a danger far greater than any it had to meet in the old Europe, in the anarchy and chaos that nationalism itself is at present producing.

The greater States, like Germany, may conceivably manage somehow to find a *modus vivendi*. A self-sufficing State may perhaps be developed (a fact which will enable Germany at one and the same time to escape the payment of reparations and to defy future blockades). But that will mean embittered nationalism. The sense of exclusion and resentment will remain.

The need of Germany for outside raw materials and food may, as the result of this effort to become self-sufficing, prove less than the above considerations might suggest. But unhappily, assumed need can be as patent a motive in international politics as real need. Our recent acquiescence in the independence of Egypt would imply that our need for persistent occupation was not as great as we supposed. Yet the desire to remain in Egypt helped to shape our foreign policy during a whole generation, and played no small part in the bargaining with France over Morocco which widened the gulf between ourselves and Germany.

The preservation of the principle of nationality depends upon

making it subject at least to some form of internationalism. If 'self-determination' means the right to condemn other peoples to death by starvation, then that principle cannot survive. The Balkanisation of Europe, turning it into a cauldron of rival 'absolute' nationalisms, does not mean safety for the principle of nationality, it means its ultimate destruction either by anarchy or by the autocratic domination of the great Powers. The problem is to reconcile national right and international obligation. That will mean a discipline of the national impulse, and of the instincts of domination which so readily attach themselves to it. The recognition of economic needs will certainly help towards such discipline. However 'materialistic' it may be to recognise the right of others to life, that recognition makes a sounder foundation for human society than do the instinctive impulses of mystic nationalism.

Until we have managed somehow to create an economic code or comity which makes the sovereignty of each nationality subject to the general need of the whole body of organised society, this struggle, in which nationality is for ever threatened, will go on.

The alternatives were very clearly stated on the other side of the Atlantic:—

'The underlying assumption heretofore has been that a nation's security and prosperity rest chiefly upon its own strength and resources. Such an assumption has been used to justify statesmen in attempting, on the ground of the supreme need for national security, to increase their own nation's power and resources by insistence upon strategic frontiers, territory with raw material, outlets to the sea, even though that course does violence to the security and prosperity of others. Under any system in which adequate defence rests upon individual preponderance of power, the security of one must involve the insecurity of another, and must inevitably give rise to covert or overt competitions for power and territory, dangerous to peace and destructive to justice.

'Under such a system of competitive as opposed to co-

operative nationalism, the smaller nationalities can never be really secure. International commitments of some kind there must be. The price of secure nationality is some degree of internationalism.

'The problem is to modify the conditions that lead to war. It will be quite inadequate to establish courts of arbitration or of law if they have to arbitrate or judge on the basis of the old laws and practices. These have proved insufficient.

'It is obvious that any plan ensuring national security and equality of opportunity will involve a limitation of national sovereignty. States possessing ports that are the natural outlet of a hinterland occupied by another people, will perhaps regard it as an intolerable invasion of their independence if their sovereignty over those ports is not absolute but limited by the obligation to permit of their use by a foreign and possibly rival people on equal terms. States possessing territories in Africa or Asia inhabited by populations in a backward state of development, have generally heretofore looked for privileged and preferential treatment of their own industry and commerce in those territories. Great interests will be challenged, some sacrifice of national pride demanded, and the hostility of political factions in some countries will be aroused.

'Yet if, after the War, States are to be shut out from the sea; if rapidly expanding populations find themselves excluded from raw materials indispensable to their prosperity; if the privileges and preferences enjoyed by States with overseas territories place the less powerful States at a disadvantage, we shall have re-established potent motives for that competition for political power which, in the past, has been so large an element in the causation of war and the subjugation of weaker peoples. The ideal of the security of all nations and "equality of opportunity" will have failed of realisation.'[1]

[1] From a manifesto signed by a large number of American intellectuals, business men, and Labour Leaders ('League of Free Nations Association' on the eve of President Wilson's departure for Paris.

The Balance of Power and Defence of Law and Nationality.

'Why were you so whole-soully for this war?' asked the interviewer of Mr Lloyd George.

'Belgium,' was the reply.

The Prime Minister of the morrow continued:—

'The Saturday after war had actually been declared on the Continent (Saturday, 1st August), a poll of the electors of Great Britain would have shown ninety-five per cent. against embroiling this country in hostilities. Powerful city financiers whom it was my duty to interview this Saturday on the financial situation, ended the conference with an earnest hope that Britain would keep out of it. A poll on the following Tuesday would have resulted in a vote of ninety-nine per cent. in favour of war.

'What had happened in the meantime? The revolution in public sentiment was attributable entirely to an attack made by Germany on a small and unprotected country, which had done her no wrong, and what Britain was not prepared to do for interests political and commercial, she readily risked to help the weak and helpless. Our honour as a nation is involved in this war, because we are bound in an honourable obligation to defend the independence, the liberty, the integrity of a small neighbour that has lived peaceably; but she could not have compelled us, being weak. The man who declined to discharge his debt because his creditor is too poor to enforce it, is a blackguard.'

A little later, in the same interview, Mr Lloyd George, after allusion to German misrepresentations, said:—

'But this I know is true—after the guarantee given that the German fleet would not attack the coast of France or annex any French territory, *I* would not have been party to a declaration of war, had Belgium not been invaded, and I think I can say

the same thing for most, if not all, of my colleagues. If Germany had been wise, she would not have set foot on Belgian soil. The Liberal Government then would not have intervened. Germany made a grave mistake.'[1]

This interview compels several very important conclusions. One, perhaps the most important—and the most hopeful—is profoundly creditable to English popular instinct and not so creditable to Mr Lloyd George.

If Mr Lloyd George is speaking the truth (it is difficult to find just the phrase which shall express one's meaning and be Parliamentary), if he believes it would have been entirely safe for Great Britain to have kept out of the War provided only that the invasion of Belgium could have been prevented, then indeed is the account against the Cabinet, of which he was then a member and (after modifications in it) was shortly to become the head, a heavy one. I shall not pursue here the inquiry whether in point of simple political fact, Belgium was the sole cause of our entrance into the War, because I don't suppose anybody believes it. But—and here Mr Lloyd George almost certainly does speak the truth—the English people gave their whole-souled support to the war because they believed it to be for a cause of which Belgium was the shining example and symbol: the right of the small nation to the same consideration as the great. That objective may not have been the main inspiration of the Governments: it was the main moral inspiration of the British people, the sentiment which the Government exploited, and to which it mainly appealed.

'The purpose of the Allies in this War,' said Mr Asquith, 'is to pave the way for an international system which will secure the principle of equal rights for all civilised States . . . to render secure the principle that international problems must be handled by free people and that their settlement shall no longer be hampered and swayed by the overmastering dictation of

[1] Interview published by *Pearson's Magazine*, March, 1915.

a Government controlled by a military caste.' We should not sheathe the sword 'until the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe are placed upon an unassailable foundation. Professor Headlam (an ardent upholder of the Balance of Power, by the way), in a book that is characteristic of the early war literature, says the cardinal principles for which the War was fought were two: first, that Europe is, and should remain, divided between independent national States, and, second, that subject to the condition that it did not threaten or interfere with the security of other States, each country should have full and complete control over its own affairs.

How far has our victory achieved that object? Is the policy which our power supported before the War—and still supports—compatible with it? Does it help to strengthen the national security of Belgium, and other weak States like Yugo-Slavia, Poland, Albania, Finland, the Russian Border States, China?

It is here suggested, first, that our commitments under the Balance of Power policy which we had espoused[1] deprived our national force of any preventive effectiveness whatever in so far as the invasion of Belgium was concerned, and secondly, that our post-war policy, which is also in fact a Balance of Power policy is betraying in like fashion the cause of the small State.

It is further suggested that the very nature of the operation

[1] *Times*, March 8, 1915. 'Our honour and interest must have compelled us to join France and Russia even if Germany had scrupulously respected the rights of her small neighbours and had sought to hack her way through the Eastern fortresses. The German Chancellor has insisted more than once upon this truth. He has fancied apparently that he was making an argumentative point against us by establishing it. That, like so much more, only shows his complete misunderstanding of our attitude and our character. . . . We reverted to our historical policy of the Balance of Power.'

The *Times* maintains the same position five years later (July 31st, 1920): 'It needed more than two years of actual warfare to render the British people wholly conscious that they were fighting not a quixotic fight for Belgium and France, but a desperate battle for their own existence.'

of the Balance of Power policy sets up in practice a conflict of obligation: if our power is pledged to the support of one particular group, like the Franco-Russian group of 1914, it cannot also be pledged to the support, honestly and impartially, of a general principle of European law.

We were drawn into the War, Mr Lloyd George tells us, to vindicate the integrity of Belgium. Very good. We know what happened in the negotiations. Germany wanted very much to know what would induce us to keep out of the War. Would we keep out of the War if Germany refrained from crossing the Belgian frontier? Such an assurance, giving Germany the strongest material reasons for not invading Belgium, converting a military reason (the only reason, we are told, that Germany would listen to) for that offence into an immensely powerful military reason against it, could not be given. In order to be able to maintain the Balance of Power against Germany we must 'keep our hands free.'

It is not a question here of Germany's trustworthiness, but of using her sense of self-interest to secure our object of the protection of Belgium. The party in the German councils opposed to the invasion would say: 'If you invade Belgium you will have to meet the hostility of Great Britain. If you don't, you will escape that hostility.' To which the general staff was able to reply: 'Britain's Balance of Power policy means that you will have to meet the enmity of Britain in any case. In terms of expediency, it does not matter whether you go through Belgium or not.'

The fact that the principle of the 'Balance' compelled us to support France, whether Germany respected the Treaty of 1839 or not, deprived our power of any value as a restraint upon German military designs against Belgium. There was, in fact, a conflict of obligations: the obligations to the Balance of Power rendered that to the support of the Treaty of no avail in terms of protection. If the object of force is to compel observance of law on the part of those who will not

observe it otherwise, that object is defeated by the entanglements of the Balance of Power.

Sir Edward Grey's account of that stage of the negotiations at which the question of Belgium was raised, is quite clear and simple. The German Ambassador asked him 'whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian neutrality, we would engage to remain neutral.' 'I replied,' writes Sir Edward, 'that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone. The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her Colonies might be guaranteed. I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.'

'If language means anything,' comments Lord Loreburn,[1] 'this means that whereas Mr Gladstone bound this country to war in order to safeguard Belgian neutrality, Sir Edward would not even bind this country to neutrality to save Belgium. He may have been right, but it was not for the sake of Belgian interests that he refused.'

Compare our experience, and the attitude of Sir Edward Grey in 1914, when we were concerned to maintain the Balance of Power, with our experience and Mr Gladstone's behaviour when precisely the same problem of protecting Belgium was raised in 1870. In these circumstances Mr Gladstone proposed both to France and to Prussia a treaty by which Great Britain undertook that, if either of the belligerents should in the course of that war violate the neutrality of Belgium, Great Britain would co-operate with the other belligerent in defence of the same, 'employing for that purpose her naval and military forces to ensure its observance.' In

[1] *How the War Came*, p. 238.

this way both France and Germany knew and the whole world knew, that invasion of Belgium meant war with Great Britain. Whichever belligerent violated the neutrality must reckon with the consequences. Both France and Prussia signed that Treaty. Belgium was saved.

Lord Loreborn (*How the War Came*) says of the incident:—

'This policy, which proved a complete success in 1870, indicated the way in which British power could effectively protect Belgium against an unscrupulous neighbour. But then it is a policy which cannot be adopted unless this country is itself prepared to make war against either of the belligerents which shall molest Belgium. For the inducement to each of such belligerents is the knowledge that he will have Great Britain as an enemy if he invades Belgium, and as an Ally if his enemy attacks him through Belgian territory. And that cannot be a security unless Great Britain keeps herself free to give armed assistance to either should the other violate the Treaty. The whole leverage would obviously disappear if we took sides in the war on other grounds.' [1]

This, then, is an illustration of the truth above insisted upon: to employ our force for the maintenance of the Balance of Power is to deprive it of the necessary impartiality for the maintenance of Right.

Much more clear even than in the case of Belgium was the conflict in certain other cases between the claims of the Bal-

[1] Lord Loreburn adds:—
'But Sir Edward Grey in 1914 did not and could not offer similar Treaties to France and Germany because our relations with France and the conduct of Germany were such, that for us to join Germany in any event was unthinkable. And he did not proclaim our neutrality because our relations with France, as described in his own speech, were such that he could not in honour refuse to join France in the war. Therefore the example of 1870 could not be followed in 1914, and Belgium was not saved but destroyed.'

ance of Power and our obligation to place 'the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe upon an unassailable foundation' which Mr Asquith proclaimed as the object of the War.

The archetype of suppressed nationality was Poland; a nation with an ancient culture, a passionate and romantic attachment to its ancient traditions, which had simply been wiped off the map. If ever there was a case of nation-murder it was this. And one of the culprits—perhaps the chief culprit—was Russia. To-day the Allies, notably France, stand as the champions of Polish nationality. But as late as 1917, as part of that kind of bargain which inevitably marks the old type of diplomatic Alliance, France was agreeing to hand over Poland, helpless, to her old jailer, the Czarist Government. In March, 1916, the Russian Ambassador in Paris was instructed that, at the then impending diplomatic conference[1]

'It is above all necessary to demand that the Polish question should be excluded from the subjects of international negotiation, and that all attempts to place Poland's future under the guarantee and control of the Powers should be prevented.'

On February 12th, 1917, the Russian Foreign Minister informed the Russian Ambassador that M. Doumergue (French Ambassador in Petrograd) had told the Czar of France's wish to get Alsace-Lorraine at the end of the War, and also 'a special position in the Saar Valley, and to bring about the detachment from Germany of the territories west of the Rhine and their reorganisation in such a way that in future the Rhine may form a permanent strategic obstacle to any German advance.' The Czar was pleased to express his approval in principle of this proposal. Accordingly the Russian Foreign Minister expressed his wish that an Agreement by exchange of Notes should take place on this subject,

[1] See the Documents published by the Russian Government in November, 1917.

and desired that if Russia agreed to the unrestricted right of France and Britain to fix Germany's western frontiers, so Russia was to have an assurance of freedom of action in fixing Germany's future frontier on the east. (This means the Russian western frontier.) [1]

Or take the case of Serbia, the oppressed nationality whose struggle for freedom against Austria was the immediate cause of the War. It was because Russia would not permit Austria to do with reference to Serbia, what Russia claimed the right to do with reference to Poland, that the latter made of the Austrian policy a *casus belli.*

Very well. We stood at least for the vindication of Serbian nationality. But the 'Balance' demanded that we should win Italy to our side of the scale. She had to be paid. So on April 20th, 1915, without informing Serbia, Sir Edward Grey signed a Treaty (the last article of which stipulated that it should be kept secret) giving to Italy the whole of Dalmatia, in its present extent, together with the islands north and west of the Dalmatian coast and Istria as far as the Quarnero and the Istrian Islands. That Treaty placed under Italian rule whole populations of Southern Slavs, creating inevitably a Southern Slav irredentism, and put the Yugo-Slavia, that we professed to be creating, under the same kind of economic disability which it had suffered from the Austrian Empire. One is not astonished to find Signor Salandra describing the principles which should guide his policy as 'a freedom from all preoccupations and prejudices, and from every sentiment except that of "Sacred egoism" (*sacro egoismo*) for Italy.'

To-day, it need hardly be said, there is bitter hatred between our Serbian Ally and our Italian Ally, and most patriotic

[1] It is not clear whether the undertaking to Russia was actually given. Lord R. Cecil in the House of Commons on July 24th, 1917, said: 'It will be for this country to back up the French in what they desire. I will not go through all the others of our Allies—there are a good many of them—but the principle (to stand by our Allies) will be equally there in the case of all and particularly in the case of Serbia.

Yugo-Slavs regard war with Italy one day as inevitable.[1] Yet, assuredly, Sir Edward Grey is not to be blamed. If allegiance to the Balance of Power was to come first, allegiance to any principle, of nationality or of anything else, must come second.

The moral implications of this political method received another illustration in the case of the Rumanian Treaty. Its nature is indicated in the Report of General Polivanov, amongst the papers published at Petrograd and dated 7th-20th November, 1916. It explains how Rumania was at first a neutral, but shifting between different inclinations—a wish not to come in too late for the partition of Austria-Hungary, and a wish to earn as much as possible at the expense of the belligerents. At first, according to this Report, she favoured our enemies and had obtained very favourable commercial agreements with Germany and Austria-Hungary. Then in 1916, on the Russian successes under Brusilov, she inclined to the Entente Powers. The Russian Chief of the Staff thought Rumanian neutrality preferable to her intervention, but later on General Alexeiev adopted the view of the Allies, 'who looked upon Rumania's entry as a decisive blow for Austria-Hungary and as the nearing of the War's end.' So in August, 1916, an agreement was signed with Rumania (by whom it was signed is not stated, assigning to her Bukovina and all Transylvania. 'The events which followed,' says the report, 'showed how greatly our Allies were mistaken and how they overvalued Rumania's entry.' In fact, Rumania was in a brief time utterly overthrown. And then Polivanov points out that the collapse of Rumania's plans as a Great Power 'is not particularly opposed to Russia's interests.'

One might follow up this record and see how far the method of the Balance has protected the small and weak nation in the

[1] Since these lines were written, there has been a change of government and of policy in Italy. An agreement has been reached with Yugo-Slavia, which appears to satisfy the moderate elements in both countries.

case of Albania, whose partition was arranged for in April, 1915, under the Treaty of London; in the case of Macedonia and the Bulgarian Macedonians; in the case of Western Thrace, of the Serbian Banat, of the Bulgar Dobrudja, of the Southern Tyrol, of German Bohemia, of Shantung—of still further cases in which we were compelled to change or modify or betray the cause for which we entered the War in order to maintain the preponderance of power by which we could achieve military success.

The moral paralysis exemplified in this story is already infecting our nascent efforts at creating a society of nations—witness the relation of the League with Poland. No one in 1920 justified the Polish claims made against Russia. Our own communications to Russia described them as 'imperialistic.' The Prime Minister condemned them in unmeasured terms. Poland was a member of the League. Her supplies of arms and ammunition, military stores, credit, were obtained by the grace of the chief members of the League. The only port by which arms could enter Poland was a city under the special control of the League. An appeal was made to the League to take steps to prevent the Polish adventure. Lord Robert Cecil advocated the course with particular urgency. The Soviet Government itself, while Poland was preparing, appealed to the chief constitutional governments of the League for some preventive action. Why was none taken? Because the Balance of Power demanded that we should 'stand by France,' and Polish Imperialism was part of the policy quite overtly and deliberately laid down by M. Clemenceau, who, with a candour entirely admirable, expressed his preference for the old system of alliances as against the newfangled Society of Nations. We could not restrain Poland and at the same time fulfil our Alliance obligations to France, who was supporting the Polish policy.[1]

[1] Lord Curzon (May 17th, 1920) wrote that he did not see how we could invoke the League to restrain Poland. The Poles, he added,

By reason of the grip of this system we supported (while proclaiming the sacredness of the cause of oppressed nationalities) or acquiesced in the policy of Czarist Russia against Poland, and incidentally Finland; we supported Poland against republican Russia; we encouraged the creation of small border States as means of fighting Soviet Russia, while we aided Koltchak and Denikin, who would undoubtedly if successful have suppressed the border States. We supported the Southern Slavs against Austria when we desired to destroy the latter; we supported Italy (in secret treaties) against the Southern Slavs when we desired the help of the former. Violations and repressions of nationality which, when committed by the enemy States, we declared should excite the deathless resistance of all free men and call down the punishment of Heaven, we acquiesce in and are silent about when committed by our Allies.

This was the Fight for Right, the war to vindicate the moral law in the relations of States.

The political necessities of the Balance of Power have prevented the country from pledging its power, untrammelled, to the maintenance of Right. The two objects are in theory and practice incompatible. The Balance of Power is in fact an assertion of the principle of *Macht-Politik*, of the principle that Might makes Right.

---

must choose war or peace on their own responsibility. Mr Lloyd George (June 19th, 1920) declared that 'the League of Nations could not intervene in Poland.'

CHAPTER IV

MILITARY PREDOMINANCE—AND INSECURITY

The War revealed this: However great the military power of a State, as in the case of France; however great its territorial extent, as in the case of the British Empire; or its economic resources and geographical isolation as in the case of the United States, the conditions of the present international order compel that State to resort to Alliance as an indispensable part of its military defence. And the peace reveals this: that no Alliance can long resist the disruptive forces of nationalist psychology. So rapid indeed has been the disintegration of the Alliance that fought this War, that, from this one cause, the power indispensable for carrying out the Treaty imposed upon the enemy has on the morrow of victory already disappeared.

So much became patent in the year that followed the signing of the Treaty. The fact bears of course fundamentally upon the question of the use of political power for those economic ends discussed in the preceding pages. If the economic policy of the Treaty of Versailles is to be carried out, it will in any case demand a preponderance of power so immense and secure that the complete political solidarity of the Alliance which fought the War must be assumed. It cannot be assumed. That Alliance has in fact already gone to pieces; and with it the unquestioned preponderance of power.

The fact bears not only upon the use of power for the purpose of carrying an economic policy—or some moral end, like the defence of Nationality—into effect. The disruptive

influence of the Nationalisms of which alliances are composed raises the question of how far a military preponderance resting on a National foundation can even give us political security.

If the moral factors of nationality are, as we have seen, an indispensable part of the study of international economics, so must those same factors be considered as an indispensable part of the problem of the power to be exercised by an alliance.

During the War there was an extraordinary neglect of this simple truth. It seemed to occur to no one that the intensification of the psychology of nationalism—not only among the lesser States but in France and America and England—ran the risk of rendering the Alliance powerless after its victory. Yet that is what has happened.

The power of an Alliance (again we are dealing with things that are obvious but neglected) does not depend upon the sum of its material forces—navies, armies, artillery. It depends upon being able to assemble those things to a common purpose; in other words, upon policy fit to direct the instrument. If the policy, or certain moral elements within it, are such that one member of the Alliance is likely to turn his arms against the others, the extent of *his* armament does not add to the strength of the Alliance. It was with ammunition furnished by Britain and France that Russia in 1919 and 1920 destroyed British and French troops. The present building of an enormous navy by America is not accepted in Britain as necessarily adding to the security of the British Empire.

It is worth while to note how utterly fallacious are certain almost universal assumptions concerning the relation of war psychology to the problem of alliance solidarity. An English visitor to the United States (or an American visitor to England) during the years 1917-1918 was apt to be deluged by a flood of rhetoric to this effect: The blood shed on the same battlefields, the suffering shared in common in the same common cause, would unite and cement as nothing had ever yet united

the two great branches of the English-speaking race, destined by Providence. . . .

But the same visitor moving in the same circle less than two years later found that this eternal cement of friendship had already lost its potency. Never, perhaps, for generations were Anglo-American relations so bad as they had become within a score or so of months of the time that Englishmen and Americans were dying side by side on the battle-field. At the beginning of 1921, in the United States, it was easier, on a public platform, to defend Germany than to present a defence of English policy in Ireland or in India. And at that period one might hear commonly enough in England, in trams and railway carriages, a repetition of the catch phrase, 'America next.' If certain popular assumptions as to war psychology were right, these things would be impossible.

Yet, as a matter of fact, the psychological phenomenon is true to type. It was not an accident that the internationalist America of 1915, of 'Peace without Victory,' should by 1918 have become more fiercely insistent upon absolute victory and unconditional surrender than any other of the belligerents, whose emotions had found some outlet during three years of war before America had begun. The complete reversal of the 'Peace without Victory' attitude was demanded—cultivated, deliberately produced—as a necessary part of war morale. But these emotions of coercion and domination cannot be intensively cultivated and then turned off as by a tap. They made America fiercely nationalist, with necessarily a temperamental distaste for the internationalism of Mr Wilson. And when a mere year of war left the emotional hungers unsatisfied, they turned unconsciously to other satisfactions. Twenty million Americans of Irish descent or association, among others, utilised the opportunity.

One feature—perhaps the very largest feature of all—of war morale, had been the exploitation of the German atrocities. The burning of Louvain, and other reprisals upon the Belgian

civilian population, meant necessarily a special wickedness on the part of a definite entity, known as 'Germany,' that had to be crushed, punished, beaten, wiped out. There were no distinctions. The plea that all were not equally guilty excited the fierce anger reserved for all such 'pacifist' and pro-German pleas. A German woman had laughed at a wounded American: all German women were monsters. 'No good German but a dead German.' It was in the German blood and grey matter. The elaborate stories—illustrated—of Germans sticking bayonets into Belgian children produced a thesis which was beyond and above reason or explanation: for that atrocity, 'Germany'—seventy million people, ignorant peasants, driven workmen, the babies, the invalids, the old women gathering sticks in the forest, the children trooping to school—all were guilty. To state the thing in black and white sounds like a monstrous travesty. But it is not a travesty. It is the thesis we, too, maintained; but in America it had, in the American way, an over simplification and an extra emphasis.

And then after the War an historical enemy of America's does precisely the same thing. In the story of Amritsar and the Irish reprisals it is the Indian and Sinn Fein version only which is told; just as during the War we got nothing but the anti-German version of the burning of Louvain, or reprisals upon civilians. Why should we expect that the result should be greatly different upon American opinion? Four hundred unarmed and hopeless people, women and children as well as men, are mown down by machine-guns. Or, in the Irish reprisals, a farmer is shot in the presence of his wife and children. The Government defends the soldiers. 'Britain' has done this thing: forty-five millions of people, of infinitely varying degrees of responsibility, many opposing it, many ignorant of it, almost all entirely helpless. To represent them as inhuman monsters because of these atrocities is an infinitely mischievous falsehood. But it is made possible by a theory, which in the case of Germany we maintained for years as essentially true.

And now it is doing as between Britain and America what a similar falsehood did as between Germany and England, and will go on doing so long as Nationalism includes conceptions of collective responsibility which fly in the face of common sense and truth. If the resultant hostilities can operate as between two national groups like the British and the American, what groups can be free of them?

It is a little difficult now, two years after the end of the War, with the world in its present turmoil, to realise that we really did expect the defeat of Germany to inaugurate an era of peace and security, of reduction of armaments, the virtual end of war; and believed that it was German militarism, 'that trampling, drilling foolery in the heart of Europe, that has arrested civilisation and darkened the hopes of mankind for forty years,'[1] as Mr Wells wrote in *The War that will End War,* which accounted for nearly all the other militarisms, and that after its destruction we could anticipate 'the end of the armament phase of European history.' For, explained Mr Wells, 'France, Italy, England, and all the smaller Powers of Europe are now pacific countries; Russia, after this huge War, will be too exhausted for further adventure.'[2]

'When will peace come?' asked Professor Headlam, and answered that

'It will come when Germany has learnt the lesson of the War, when it has learnt, as every other nation has had to learn, that the voice of Europe cannot be defied with impunity. . . . Men talk about the terms of peace. They matter little. With a Germany victorious no terms could secure the future of Europe, with a Germany defeated, no artificial securities will be wanted, for there will be a stronger security in the consciousness of defeat.'[3]

[1] *The War that will End War,* p. 14.
[2] *Ibid,* p. 19.
[3] *The Issue,* p. 37-39.

There were to be no limits to the political or economic rearrangements which victory would enable us to effect. Very authoritative military critics like Mr Hilaire Belloc became quite angry and contemptuous at the suggestion that the defeat of the enemy would not enable us to rearrange Europe at our will. The doctrine that unlimited power was inherent in victory was thus stated by Mr Belloc:—

'It has been well said that the most straightforward and obvious conclusions on the largest lines of military policy are those of which it is most difficult to convince a general audience; and we find in this matter a singular miscalculation running through the attitude of many Western publicists. They speak as though, whatever might happen in the West, the Alliance, which is fighting for European civilisation, the Western Allies and the United States, could not now affect the destinies of Eastern Europe. . . .

Such an attitude is, upon the simplest principles of military science, a grotesque error. . . . If we are victorious . . . the destruction of the enemy's military power gives us as full an opportunity for deciding the fate of Eastern Europe as it does for deciding the fate of Western Europe. Victory gained by the Allies will decide the fate of all Europe, and, for that matter, of the whole world. It will open the Baltic and the Black Sea. It will leave us masters with the power to dictate in what fashion the new boundaries shall be arranged, how the entries to the Eastern markets shall be kept open, garrisoned and guaranteed. . . .

Wherever they are defeated, whether upon the line they now hold or upon other lines, their defeat and our victory will leave us with complete power. If that task be beyond our strength, then civilisation has suffered defeat, and there is the end of it.'

German power was to be destroyed as the condition of saving civilisation. Mr Belloc wrote:—

'If by some negotiation (involving of course the evacuation of the occupied districts in the West) the enemy remains undefeated, civilised Europe has lost the war and Prussia has won it.'[1]

Such was the simple and popular thesis. Germany, criminal and barbarian, challenged Europe, civilised and law-abiding. Civilisation can only assert itself by the punishment of Germany and save itself by the destruction of German power. Once the German military power is destroyed, Europe can do with Germany what it will.

I suggest that the experience of the last two years, and our own present policy, constitute an admission or demonstration, first, that the moral assumption of this thesis—that the menace of German power was due to some special wickedness on the part of the German nation not shared by other peoples in any degree—is false; and, secondly, that the destruction of Germany's military force gives to Europe no such power to control Germany.

Our power over Germany becomes every day less:

First, by the break-up of the Alliance. The 'sacred egoisms' which produced the War are now disrupting the Allies. The most potentially powerful European member of the Alliance or Association—Russia—has become an enemy; the most powerful member of all, America, has withdrawn from co-operation; Italy is in conflict with one Ally, Japan with another.

Secondly, by the more extended Balkanisation of Europe. The States utilised by (for instance) France as the instruments of Allied policy (Poland, Hungary, Ukrainia, Rumania, Czecho-Slovakia) are liable to quarrel among themselves. The groups rendered hostile to Allied policy—Germany, Russia, China—are much larger, and might well once more become cohesive units. The Nationalism which is a factor of

[1] *Land and Water,* February 21st, 1918.

Allied disintegration may nevertheless work for the consolidation of the groups opposed to us.

Thirdly, by the economic disorganisation of Europe (resulting mainly from the desire to weaken the enemy), which deprives the Alliance of economic resources sufficient for a military task like that of the conquest of Russia or the occupation of Germany.

Fourthly, by the social unrest within each country (itself due in part to the economic disorganisation, in part to the introduction of the psychology of jingoism into the domain of industrial strife): Bolshevism. A long war of intervention in Russia by the Alliance would have broken down under the strain of internal unrest in Allied countries.

The Alliance thus succumbs to the clash of Nationalisms and the clash of classes.

These moral factors render the purpose which will be given to accumulated military force—'the direction in which the guns will shoot'—so uncertain that the amount of material power available is no indication of the degree of security attained.

If it were true, as we argued so universally before and during the War, that German power was the final cause of the armament rivalry in Europe, then the disappearance of that power should mark, as so many prophesied it would mark, the end of the 'armament era.'[1] Has it done so? Or

[1] Even as late as January 13th, 1920, Mr H. W. Wilson of the *Daily Mail* writes that if the disarmament of Germany is carried out 'the real cause of swollen armaments in Europe will vanish.'

On May 18th, 1920, Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson (*Morning Post*, May 19th) declares himself thus:—

'We were told that after this last war we were to have peace. We have not; there are something between twenty and thirty bloody wars going on at the present moment. We were told that the great war was to end war. It did not; it could not. We have a very difficult time ahead, whether on the sea, in the air, or on the land.' He wanted them to take away the warning from a fellow soldier that their country and their Empire both wanted them to-day as much as ever they had, and if they were as proud of belonging to the British Empire as he was they would do their best, in whatever capacity they served, to qualify themselves for the times that were coming.

does any one to-day seriously argue that the increase of armament expenditure over the pre-war period is in some mystic way due to Prussian militarism?

Let us turn to a *Times* leader in the summer of 1920:—

'To-day the condition of Europe and of a large portion of the world is scarcely less critical than it was six years ago. Within a few days, or at most a few weeks, we may know whether the Peace Treaty signed at Versailles will possess effective validity. The independent existence of Poland, which is a keystone of the reorganisation of Europe contemplated by the Treaty, is in grave peril; and with it, though perhaps not in the manner currently imagined in Germany, is jeopardised the present situation of Germany herself.

. . . There is undoubtedly a widespread plot against Western civilisation as we know it, and probably against British liberal institutions as a principal mainstay of that civilisation. Yet if our institutions, and Western civilisation with them, are to withstand the present onslaught, they must be defended. . . . . We never doubted the staunchness and vigour of England six years ago, and we doubt them as little to-day.' [1]

And so we must have even larger armaments than ever. Field-Marshal Earl Haig and Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson in England, Marshal Foch in France, General Leonard Wood in America, all urge that it will be indispensable to maintain our armaments at more than the pre-war scale. The ink of the Armistice was barely dry before the *Daily Mail* published a long interview with Marshal Foch [2] in the course of which the Generalissimo enlarged on the 'inevitability' of war in the future and the need of being 'prepared for it.' Lord Haig, in his Rectorial Address at St Andrews (May 14th, 1919) followed with the plea that as 'the seeds of future conflict are to be found in every quarter, only waiting the right condition, moral, economic, political, to burst once more into

[1] July 31st, 1920. [2] April 19th, 1919.

activity,' every man in the country must immediately be trained for war. The *Mail,* supporting his plea, said:—

'We all desire peace, but we cannot, even in the hour of complete victory, disregard the injunction uttered by our first soldier, that "only by adequate preparation for war can peace in every way be guaranteed."

'"A strong citizen army on strong territorial lines," is the advice Sir Douglas Haig urges on the country. A system providing twelve months' military training for every man in the country should be seriously thought of . . . Morally and physically the War has shown us that the effect of discipline upon the youths of the country is an asset beyond calculation.'

So that the victory which was to end the 'trampling and drilling foolery' is made a plea for the institution of permanent conscription in England, where, before the victory, it did not exist.

The admission involved in this recommendation, the admission that destruction of German power has failed to give us security, is as complete as it well could be.

If this was merely the exuberant zeal of professional soldiers, we might perhaps disregard these declarations. But the conviction of the soldiers is reflected in the policy of the Government. At a time when the financial difficulties of all the Allied countries are admittedly enormous, when the bankruptcy of some is a contingency freely discussed, and when the need of economy is the refrain everywhere, there is not an Allied State which is not to-day spending more upon military and naval preparations than it was spending before the destruction of the German power began. America is preparing to build a bigger fleet than she has ever had in her history [1]—a larger fleet than

[1] A Reuter Despatch dated August 31st, 1920, says:—
'Speaking to-day at Charleston (West Virginia) Mr Daniels, U. S. Naval Secretary, said: "We are building enormous docks and are constructing 18 dreadnoughts and battle cruisers, with a dozen other powerful ships which in effective fighting power will give our navy world primacy."'

the German armada, which was for most Englishmen perhaps the decisive demonstration of Germany's hostile intent. Britain on her side has at present a larger naval budget than that of the year which preceded the War; while for the new war instrument of aviation she has a building programme more costly than the shipbuilding programmes of pre-war time. France is to-day spending more on her army than before the War; spending, indeed, upon it now a sum larger than that which she spent upon the whole of her Government when German militarism was undestroyed.

Despite all this power possessed by the members of the Alliance, the predominant note in current political criticism is that Germany is evading the execution of the Treaty of Versailles, that in the payment of the indemnity, the punishment of military criminals, and disarmament, the Treaty is a dead letter, and the Allies are powerless. As the *Times* reminds us, the very keystone of the Treaty, in the independence of Poland, trembles.

It is not difficult to recall the fashion in which we thought and wrote of the German menace before and during the War. The following from *The New Europe* (which had taken as its device 'La Victoire Intégrale') will be recognised as typical:—

'It is of vital importance to us to understand, not only Germany's aims, but the process by which she hopes to carry them through. If Germany wins, she will not rest content with this victory. Her next object will be to prepare for further victories both in Asia and in Central and Western Europe.

'Those who still cherish the belief that Prussia is pacifist show a profound misunderstanding of her psychology. . . . On this point the Junkers have been frank: those who have not been frank are the wiseacres who try to persuade us that we can moderate their attitude by making peace with them.

If they would only pay a little more attention to the Junkers' avowed objects, and a little less attention to their own theories about those objects, they would be more useful guides to public opinion in this country, which finds itself hopelessly at sea on the subject of Prussianism.

'What then are Germany's objects? What is likely to be her view of the general situation in Europe at the present moment? . . . Whatever modifications she may have introduced into her immediate programme, she still clings to her desire to overthrow our present civilisation in Europe, and to introduce her own on the ruins of the old order. . . .

'Buoyed up by recent successes . . . her offers of peace will become more insistent and more difficult to refuse. Influences will clamour for the resumption of peace on economic and financial grounds. . . . We venture to say that it will be very difficult for any Government to resist this pressure, and, *unless the danger of coming to terms with Germany is very clearly and strongly put before the public, we may find ourselves caught in the snares that Germany has for a long time past been laying for us.*

. . . 'We shall be told that once peace is concluded the Junkers will become moderate, and all those who wish to believe this will readily accept it without further question.

'But, while we in our innocence may be priding ourselves on the conclusion of peace to Germany it will not be a peace, but a "respite." . . . This "respite" will be exceedingly useful to Germany not only for propaganda purposes, but in order to replenish her exhausted resources necessary for future aggression. Meanwhile German activities in Asia and Ireland are likely to continue unabated until the maximum inconvenience to England has been produced.'

If the reader will carry his mind back a couple of years, he will recall having read numberless articles similar to the above, concerning the duty of annihilating the power of Germany.

Well, will the reader note that *the above does not refer to Germany at all, but to Russia?* I have perpetrated a little forgery for his enlightenment. In order to bring home the rapidity with which a change of rôles can be accomplished, an article warning us against any peace with *Russia,* appearing in the *New Europe* of January 8th, 1920, has been reproduced word for word, except that 'Russia' or 'Lenin' has been changed to 'Germany' or 'the Junkers,' as the case may be.

Now let us see what this writer has to say as to the German power to-day?

Well, he says that the security of civilisation now depends upon the restoration, in part at least, of that German power, for the destruction of which the world gave twenty million lives. The danger to civilisation now is mainly 'the breach between Germany and the West, and the rivalries of nationalism.' Lenin, plotting our destruction, relies mainly on that:—

'Above all we may be sure that his attention is concentrated on England and Germany. So long as Germany remains aloof and feelings of bitterness against the Allies are allowed to grow still more acute, Lenin can rub his hands with glee; what he fears more than anything is the first sign that the sores caused by five years of war are being healed, and that England, France, and Germany are preparing to treat one another as neighbours, who have each their several parts to play in the restoration of normal economic conditions in Europe.'

As to the policy of preventing Germany's economic restoration for fear that she should once more possess the raw material of military power, this writer declares that it is precisely that Carthaginian policy (embodied in the Treaty of Versailles) which Lenin would most of all desire:—

'As a trained economist we may be sure that he looks first and foremost at the widespread economic chaos. We can

imagine his chuckle of satisfaction when he sees the European exchanges getting steadily worse and national antagonisms growing more acute. Disputes about territorial questions are to him so much grist to the Bolshevik mill, as they all tend to obscure the fundamental question of the economic reconstruction of Europe, without which no country in Europe can consider itself safe from Bolshevism.

'He must realise to the full the lamentable condition of the finances of the new States in Central and South-east Europe.'

In putting forward these views, *The New Europe* is by no means alone. Already in January, 1920, Mr J. L. Garvin had declared what indeed was obvious, that it was out of the question to expect to build a new Europe on the simultaneous hostility of Germany *and* Russia.

'Let us face the main fact. If there is to be no peace with the Bolshevists *there must be an altogether different understanding with Germany. . . . For any sure and solid barrier against the external consequences of Bolshevism Germany is essential.*'

Barely six months later Mr Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for War in the British Cabinet, chooses the *Evening News,* probably the arch-Hun-Hater of all the English Press, to open out the new policy of Alliance with Germany against Russia. He says:—

'It will be open to the Germans . . . by a supreme effort of sobriety, of firmness, of self-restraint, and of courage—undertaken, as most great exploits have to be, under conditions of peculiar difficulty and discouragement—to build a dyke of peaceful, lawful, patient strength and virtue against the flood of red barbarism flowing from the East, and thus safeguard their own interests and the interests of their principle antagonists in the West.

'If the Germans were able to render such a service, not by vainglorious military adventure or with ulterior motives, they would unquestionably have taken a giant step upon that path of self-redemption which would lead them surely and swiftly as the years pass by to their own great place in the councils of Christendom, and would have rendered easier the sincere co-operation between Britain, France, and Germany, on which the very salvation of Europe depends.'

So the salvation of Europe depends upon our co-operation with Germany, upon a German dyke of 'patient strength.' [1]

One wonders why we devoted quite so many lives and so much agony to knocking Germany out; and why we furnished quite so much treasure to the military equipment of the very Muscovite 'barbarians' who now threaten to overflow it.

One wonders also, why, if 'the very salvation of Europe' in July, 1920, depends upon sincere co-operation of the Entente with Germany, those Allies were a year earlier exacting by force her signature to a Treaty which not even its authors pretended was compatible with German reconciliation.

If the Germans are to fulfil the rôle Mr Churchill assigns to them, then obviously the Treaty of Versailles must be torn up. If they are to be the 'dyke' protecting Western civilisation against the Red military flood, it must, according to the Churchillian philosophy, be a military dyke: the disarmament clauses must be abolished, as must the other clauses—particularly the economic ones—which would make of any people suffering from them the bitter enemy of the people that imposed them. Our Press is just now full of stories of secret Treaties between Germany and Russia against France and England. Whether the stories are true or not, it is certain that the effect of the Treaty of Versailles and the Allied policy to Russia will be to create a Russo-German understanding. And Mr

[1] We are once more back to the Carlylean 'deep, patient . . . virtuous . . . Germany.'

Churchill (phase 1920) has undoubtedly indicated the alternatives. If you are going to fight Russia to the death, then you must make friends with Germany; if you are going to maintain the Treaty of Versailles, then you must make friends with Russia. You must 'trust' either the Boche or the Bolshevist.

Popular feeling at this moment (or rather the type of feeling envisaged by the Northcliffe Press) won't do either. Boche and Bolshevist alike are 'vermin' to be utterly crushed, and any policy implying co-operation with either is ruled out. 'Force . . . force to the uttermost' against both is demanded by the *Times,* the *Daily Mail,* and the various evening, weekly, or monthly editions thereof.

Very well. Let us examine the proposal to 'hold down' by force both Russia and Germany. Beyond Russia there is Asia, particularly India. The *New Europe* writer reminds us:—

' . . . If England cannot be subdued by a direct attack, she is, at any rate, vulnerable in Asia, and it is here that Lenin is preparing to deliver his real propaganda offensive. During the last few months more and more attention has been paid to Asiatic propaganda, and this will not be abandoned, no matter what temporary arrangements the Soviet Government may attempt to make with Western Europe. It is here, and here only, that England can be wounded, so that she may be counted out of the forth-coming revolutionary struggle in Europe that Lenin is preparing to engage in at a later date. . . .

'We should find ourselves so much occupied in maintaining order in Asia that we should have little time or energy left for interfering in Europe.'

As a matter of fact, we know how great are the forces that can be absorbed[1] when the territory for subjection stretches

[1] Sir Henry Wilson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, in a memorandum dated December 1st, 1919, which appears in a Blue Book on 'the Evacuation of North Russia, 1919,' says:—'There is one great lesson to be learned from the history of the campaign. . . . It is that once a military force is involved in operations on land it is almost impossible to limit the magnitude of its commitments.'

from Archangel to the Deccan—through Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan. Our experience in Archangel, Murmansk, Vladivostock, and with Koltchak, Denikin, and Wrangel shows that the military method must be thorough or it will fail. It is no good hoping that a supply of surplus ammunition to a counter-revolutionary general will subdue a country like Russia. The only safe and thorough-going plan is complete occupation—or a very extended occupation—of both countries. M. Clemenceau definitely favoured this course, as did nearly all the military-minded groups in England and America, when the Russian policy was discussed at the end of 1918 and early in 1919.

Why was that policy not carried out?

The history of the thing is clear enough. That policy would have called upon the resources in men and material of the whole of the Alliance, not merely those of the Big Four, but of Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia, Italy, Greece, and Japan as well. The 'March to Berlin and Moscow' which so many, even in England and America, were demanding at the time of the Armistice would not have been the march of British Grenadiers; nor the succeeding occupation one like that of Egypt or India. Operations on that scale would have brought in sooner or later (indeed, much smaller operations have already brought in) the forces of nations in bitter conflict the one with the other. We know what the occupation of Ireland by British troops has meant. Imagine an Ireland multiplied many times, occupied not only by British but by 'Allied' troops—British side by side with Senegalese negroes, Italians with Yugo-Slavs, Poles with Czecho-Slovaks and White Russians, Americans with Japanese. Remember, moreover, how far the disintegration of the Alliance had already advanced. The European member of the Alliance greatest in its potential resources, human and material, was of course the very country against which it was now proposed to act; the 'steamroller' had now to be destroyed . . . by the Allies.

America, the member of the Alliance, which, at the time of the Armistice, represented the greatest unit of actual material force, had withdrawn into a nationalist isolation from, and even hostility to, the European Allies. Japan was pursuing a line of policy which rendered increasingly difficult the active co-operation of certain of the Western democracies with her; her policy had already involved her in declared and open hostility to the other Asiatic element of the Alliance, China. Italy was in a state of bitter hostility to the nationality—Greater Serbia—whose defence was the immediate occasion of the War, and was soon to mark her feeling towards the peace by returning to power the Minister who had opposed Italy's entrance into the War; a situation which we shall best understand if we imagine a 'pro-German' (say, for instance, Lord Morley, or Mr Ramsay MacDonald, or Mr Philip Snowden) being made Prime Minister of England. What may be termed the minor Allies, Yugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Greece, Poland, the lesser Border States, the Arab kingdom that we erected, were drifting towards the entangling conflicts which have since broken out. Already, at a time when the Quai d'Orsay and Carmelite House were both clamouring for what must have meant in practice the occupation of both Germany and Russia, the Alliance had in fact disintegrated, and some of its main elements were in bitter conflict. The picture of a solid alliance of pacific and liberal democracies standing for the maintenance of an orderly European freedom against German attacks had completely faded away. Of the Grand Alliance of twenty-four States as a combination of power pledged to a common purpose, there remained just France and England—and their relations, too, were becoming daily worse; in fundamental disagreement over Poland, Turkey, Syria, the Balkan States, Austria, and Germany itself, its indemnities, and its economic treatment generally. Was this the instrument for the conquest of half a world?

But the political disintegration of the Alliance was not the

only obstacle to a thorough-going application of military force to the problem of Germany and Russia.

By the very terms of the theory of security by preponderant power, Germany had to be weakened economically, for her subjugation could never be secure if she were permitted to maintain an elaborate, nationally organised economic machinery, which not only gives immense powers of production, capable without great difficulty of being transformed to the production of military material, but which, through the organisation of foreign trade, gives influence in countries like Russia, the Balkans, the Near and Far East.

So part of the policy of Versailles, reflected in the clauses of the Treaty already dealt with, was to check the economic recovery of Germany and more particularly to prevent economic co-operation between that country and Russia. That Russia should become a 'German Colony' was a nightmare that haunted the minds of the French peace-makers.[1]

But, as we have already seen, to prevent the economic co-operation of Germany and Russia meant the perpetuation of the economic paralysis of Europe. Combined with the main-

[1] And Russo-German co-operation is of course precisely what French policy must create. Says an American critic:—

'France certainly carries a big stick, but she does not speak softly; she takes her own part, but she seems to fear neither God nor the revulsion of man. Yet she has reason to fear. Suppose she succeeds for a while in reducing Germany to servitude and Russia to a dictatorship of the Right, in securing her own dominion on the Continent as overlord by the petty States of Europe. What then? What can be the consequence of a common hostility of the Teutonic and Slavonic peoples, except in the end common action on their part to throw off an intolerable yoke? The nightmare of a militant Russo-German alliance becomes daily a more sinister prophecy, as France teaches the people of Europe that force alone is the solvent. France has only to convince all of Germany that the Treaty of Versailles will be enforced in all its rigour, which means occupation of the Ruhr and the loss of Silesia, to destroy the final resistance of those Germans who look to the West rather than to the East for salvation. Let it be known that the barrier of the Rhine is all bayonet and threat, and western-minded Germany must go down before the easterners, Communist or Junker. It will not matter greatly which.' (*New Republic,* Sept. 15th, 1920).

tenance of the blockade it would certainly have meant utter and perhaps irretrievable collapse.

Perhaps the Allies at the beginning of 1919 were in no mood to be greatly disturbed by the prospect. But they soon learned that it had a very close bearing both on the aims which they had set before themselves in the Treaty and, indeed, on the very problem of maintaining military predominance.

In theory, of course, an army of occupation should live on the occupied country. But it soon became evident that it was quite out of the question to collect even the cost of the armies for the limited occupation of the Rhine territories from a country whose industrial life was paralysed by blockade. Moreover, the costs of the German occupation were very sensibly increased by the fact of the Russian blockade. Deprived of Russian wheat and other products, the cost of living in Western Europe was steadily rising, the social unrest was in consequence increasing, and it was vitally necessary, if something like the old European life was to be restored, that production should be restarted as rapidly as possible. We found that a blockade of Russia which cut off Russian foodstuffs from Western Europe, was also a blockade of ourselves. But the blockade, as we have seen, was not the only economic device used as a part of military pressure: the old economic nerves between Germany and her neighbours had been cut out and the creeping paralysis of Europe was spreading in every direction. There was not a belligerent State on the Continent of Europe that was solvent in the strict sense of the term—able, that is, to discharge its obligations in the gold money in which it had contracted them. All had resorted to the shifts of paper—fictitious—money, and the debacle of the exchanges was already setting in. Whence were to come the costs of the forces and armies of occupation necessitated by the policy of complete conquest of Russia and Germany at the same time?

When, therefore (according to a story current at the time),

President Wilson, following the announcement that France stood for the military coercion of Russia, asked each Ally in turn how many troops and how much of the cost it would provide, each replied: 'None.' It was patent, indeed, that the resources of an economically paralysed Western Europe were not adequate to this enterprise. A half-way course was adopted. Britain supplied certain counter-revolutionary generals with a very considerable quantity of surplus stores, and a few military missions; France adopted the policy of using satellite States—Poland, Rumania, and even Hungary—as her tools. The result we know.

Meantime, the economic and financial situation at home (in France and Italy) was becoming desperate. France needed coal, building material, money. None of these things could be obtained from a blockaded, starving, and restless Germany. One day, doubtless, Germany will be able to pay for the armies of occupation; but it will be a Germany whose workers are fed and clothed and warmed, whose railways have adequate rolling stock, whose fields are not destitute of machines, and factories of coal and the raw materials of production. In other words, it will be a strong and organised Germany, and, if occupied by alien troops, most certainly a nationalist and hostile Germany, dangerous and difficult to watch, however much disarmed.

But there was a further force which the Allied Governments found themselves compelled to take into consideration in settling their military policy at the time of the Armistice. In addition to the economic and financial difficulties which compelled them to refrain from large scale operations in Russia and perhaps in Germany; in addition to the clash of rival nationalisms among the Allies, which was already introducing such serious rifts into the Alliance, there was a further element of weakness—revolutionary unrest, the 'Bolshevik' fever.

In December, 1918, the British Government was confronted

by the refusal of soldiers at Dover, who believed that they were being sent to Russia, to embark. A month or two later the French Government was faced by a naval mutiny at Odessa. American soldiers in Siberia refused to go into action against the Russians. Still later, in Italy, the workers enforced their decision not to handle munitions for Russia, by widespread strikes. Whether the attempt to obtain troops in very large quantities for a Russian war, involving casualties and sacrifices on a considerable scale, would have meant at the beginning of 1919 military revolts, or Communist, Spartacist, or Bolshevik revolutionary movements, or not, the Governments were evidently not prepared to face the issue.

We have seen, therefore, that the blockade and the economic weakening of our enemy are two-edged weapons, only of effective use within very definite limits; that these limits in turn condition in some degree the employment of more purely military instruments like the occupation of hostile territory; and indeed condition the provision of the instruments.

The power basis of the Alliance, such as it is, has been, since the Armistice, the naval power of England, exercised through the blockades, and the military force of France exercised mainly through the management of satellite armies. The British method has involved the greater immediate cruelty (perhaps a greater extent and degree of suffering imposed upon the weak and helpless than any coercive device yet discovered by man) though the French has involved a more direct negation of the aims for which the War was fought. French policy aims quite frankly at the re-imposition of France's military hegemony of the Continent. That aim will not be readily surrendered.

Owing to the division in Socialist and Labour ranks, to the growing fear and dislike of 'confiscatory' legislation, by a peasant population and a large *petit rentier* class, conservative elements are bound to be predominant in France for a long time. Those elements are frankly sceptical of any League

of Nations device. A League of Nations would rob them of what in the Chamber of Deputies a Nationalist called 'the Right of Victory.' But the alternative to a League as a means of security is military predominance, and France has bent her energies since the Armistice to securing it. To-day, the military predominance of France on the Continent is vastly greater than that of Germany ever was. Her chief antagonist is not only disarmed—forbidden to manufacture heavy artillery, tanks or fighting aircraft—but as we have seen, is crippled in economic life by the loss of nearly all his iron and much of his coal. France not only retains her armament, but is to-day spending more upon it than before the War. The expenditure for the army in 1920 amounted to 5000 millions of francs, whereas in 1914 it was only 1200 millions. Translate this expenditure even with due regard to the changed price level into terms of policy, and it means, *inter alia,* that the Russo-Polish war and Feisal's deposition in Syria are burdens beyond her capacity. And this is only the beginning. Within a few months France has revived the full flower of the Napoleonic tradition so far as the use of satellite military States is concerned. Poland is only one of many instruments now being industriously fashioned by the artisans of the French military renaissance. In the Ukraine, in Hungary, in Czecho-Slovakia, in Rumania, in Yugo-Slavia; in Syria, Greece, Turkey, and Africa, French military and financial organisers are at work.

M. Clemenceau, in one of his statements to the Chamber [1] on France's future policy, outlined the method:—

'We have said that we would create a system of barbed wire. There are places where it will have to be guarded to prevent Germany from passing. There are peoples like the Poles, of whom I spoke just now, who are fighting against the Soviets, who are resisting, who are in the van of civilisation.

[1] December 23rd, 1919.

Well, we have decided . . . to be the Allies of any people attacked by the Bolsheviks. I have spoken of the Poles, of the help that we shall certainly get from them in case of necessity. Well, they are fighting at this moment against the Bolsheviks, and if they are not equal to the task—but they will be equal to it—the help which we shall be able to give them in different ways, and which we are actually giving them, particularly in the form of military supplies and uniforms—that help will be continued. There is a Polish army, of which the greater part has been organised and instructed by French officers. . . . The Polish army must now be composed of from 450,000 to 500,000 men. If you look on the map at the geographical situation of this military force, you will think that it is interesting from every point of view. There is a Czecho-Slovak army, which already numbers nearly 150,000 men, well equipped, well armed, and capable of sustaining all the tasks of war. Here is another factor on which we can count. But I count on many other elements. I count on Rumania.'

Since then Hungary has been added, part of the Hungarian plan being the domination of Austria by Hungary, and, later, possibly the restoration of an Austrian Monarchy, which might help to detach monarchical and clerical Bavaria from Republican Germany.[1] This is the revival of the old French policy

[1] *The Times* of September 4th, 1920 reproduces an article from the Matin, on M. Millerand's policy with regard to small States. M. Millerand's aim was that economic aid should go hand in hand with French military protection. With this policy in view, a number of large businesses rcently passed under French control, including the Skoda factory in Czecho-Slovakia, big works at Kattowitz in Upper Silesia, the firm of Huta-Bankowa in Poland, railway factories in Rumania, and certain river systems and ports in Yugo-Slavia. In return for assistance to Admiral Horthy, an agreement was signed whereby France obtained control of the Hungarian State Railways, of the Credit Bank, the Hungarian river system and the port of Buda-pest. Other reports state that France has secured 85 per cent. of the oil-fields of Poland, in return for her help at the time of the threat to Warsaw. As the majority of shares in the Polish Oil Company 'Galicia,' which have been in British hands until recently, have been bought up by a French Company, the 'Franco-Polonaise,' France now holds an important weapon of international policy.

of preventing the unification of the German people.[1] It is that aspiration which largely explains recent French sympathy for Clericalism and Monarchism and the reversal of the policy heretofore pursued by the Third Republic towards the Vatican.

The systematic arming of African negroes reveals something of Napoleon's leaning towards the military exploitation of servile races. We are probably only at the beginning of the arming of Africa's black millions. They are, of course, an extremely convenient military material. French or British soldiers might have scruples against service in a war upon a Workers' Republic. Cannibals from the African forest 'conscribed' for service in Europe are not likely to have political or social scruples of that kind. To bring some hundreds of thousands of these Africans to Europe, to train them systematically to the use of European arms; to teach them that the European is conquerable; to put them in the position of victors over a vanquished European people—here indeed are possibilities. With Senegalese negroes having their quarters in Goethe's house, and placed, if not in authority, at least as the instruments of authority over the population of a European university city; and with the Japanese imposing their rule upon great stretches of what was yesterday a European Empire (and our Ally) a new page may well have opened for Europe.

But just consider the chances of stability for power based on

[1] The present writer would like to enter a warning here that nothing in this chapter implies that we should disregard France's very legitimate fears of a revived militarist Germany. The implication is that she is going the right way about to create the very dangers that terrify her. If this were the place to discuss alternative policies, I should certainly go on to urge that England—and America—should make it plain to France that they are prepared to pledge their power to her defence. More than that, both countries should offer to forgo the debts owing to them by France on condition of French adhesion to more workable European arrangements. The last thing to be desired is a rupture, or a mere change of rôles: France to become once more the 'enemy' and Germany once more the 'Ally.' That outcome would merely duplicate the weary story of the past.

the assumption of continued co-operation of a number of 'intense' nationalisms, each animated by its sacred egoisms. France has turned to this policy as a substitute for the alliance of two or three great States, which national feeling and conflicting interests have driven apart. Is this collection of mushroom republics to possess a stability to which the Entente could not attain?

One looks over the list. We have, it is true, after a century, the re-birth of Poland, a great and impressive case of the vindication of national right. But Poland, yesterday the victim of the imperialist oppressor, has, herself, almost in a few hours, as it were, acquired an imperialism of her own. The Pole assures us that his nationality can only be secure if he is given dominion over territories with largely non-Polish populations; if, that is, some fifteen millions of Ruthenes, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Russians, are deprived of a separate national existence. Italy, it is true, is now fully redeemed; but that redemption involves the 'irredentism' of large numbers of German Tyrolese, Yugo-Slavs, and Greeks. The new Austria is forbidden to federate with the main branch of the race to which her people belong—though federation alone can save them from physical extinction. The Czecho-Slovak nation is now achieved, but only at the expense of a German unredeemed population larger numerically than that of Alsace-Lorraine. And Slovaks and Czechs already quarrel—many foresee the day when the freed State will face its own rebels. The Slovenes and Croats and the Serbs do not yet make a 'nationality,' and threaten to fight one another as readily as they would fight the Bulgarians they have annexed in Bulgarian Macedonia. Rumania has marked her redemption by the inclusion of considerable Hungarian, Bulgarian, and Serbian 'irredentisms' within her new borders. Finland, which with Poland typified for so long the undying struggle for national right, is to-day determined to coerce the Swedes on the Aaland Islands and the Russians on the Carelian Territory.

Greek rule of Turks has already involved retaliatory, punitive, or defensive measures which have needed Blue Book explanation. Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaidjan have not yet acquired their subject nationalities.

The prospect of peace and security for these nationalities may be gathered in some measure by an enumeration of the wars which have actually broken out since the Peace Conference met in Paris, for the appeasement of Europe. The Poles have fought in turn, the Czecho-Slovaks, the Ukrainians, the Lithuanians, and the Russians. The Ukrainians have fought the Russians and the Hungarians. The Finns have fought the Russians, as have also the Esthonians and the Letts. The Esthonians and Letts have also fought the Baltic Germans. The Rumanians have fought Hungary. The Greeks have fought the Bulgarians and are at present in 'full dress' war with the Turks. The Italians have fought the Albanians, and the Turks in Asia Minor. The French have been fighting the Arabs in Syria and the Turks in Cilicia. The various British expeditions or missions, naval or military, in Archangel, Murmansk, the Baltic, the Crimea, Persia, Siberia, Turkestan, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, the Soudan, or in aid of Koltchak, Denikin, Yudenitch, or Wrangel, are not included in this list as not arising in a strict sense perhaps out of nationality problems.

Let us face what all this means in the alignment of power in the world. The Europe of the Grand Alliance is a Europe of many nationalities: British, French, Italian, Rumanian, Polish, Czecho-Slovak, Yugo-Slav, Greek, Belgian, Magyar, to say nothing of the others. None of these States exceeds greatly forty millions of people, and the populations of most are very much less. But the rival group of Germany and Russia, making between them over two hundred millions, comprises just two great States. And contiguous to them, united by the ties of common hatreds, lie the Mahomedan world and China. Prusso-Slavdom (combining racial ele-

ments having common qualities of amenity to autocratic discipline) might conceivably give a lead to Chinese and other Asiatic millions, brought to hate the West. The opposing group is a Balkanised Europe of irreconcilable national rivalries, incapable, because of those rivalries, of any prolonged common action, and taking a religious pride in the fact of this incapacity to agree. Its moral leaders, or many of them, certainly its powerful and popular instrument of education, the Press, encourage this pugnacity, regarding any effort towards its restraint or discipline as political atheism; deepening the tradition which would make 'intense' nationalism a noble, virile, and inspiring attitude, and internationalism something emasculate and despicable.

We talk of the need of 'protecting European civilisation' from hostile domination, German or Russian. It is a danger. Other great civilisations have found themselves dominated by alien power. Seeley has sketched for us the process by which a vast country with two or three hundred million souls, not savage or uncivilised but with a civilisation, though descending along a different stream of tradition, as real and ancient as our own, came to be utterly conquered and subdued by a people, numbering less than twelve millions, living on the other side of the world. It reversed the teaching of history which had shown again and again that it was impossible really to conquer an intelligent people alien in tradition from its invaders. The whole power of Spain could not in eighty years conquer the Dutch provinces with their petty population. The Swiss could not be conquered. At the very time when the conquest of India's hundreds of millions was under way, the English showed themselves wholly unable to reduce to obedience three millions of their own race in America. What was the explanation? The Inherent Superiority of the Anglo-Saxon Stock?

For long we were content to draw such a flattering conclusion and leave it at that, until Seeley pointed out the uncom-

fortable fact that the great bulk of the forces used in the conquest of India were not British at all. They were Indian. India was conquered for Great Britain by the natives of India.

'The nations of India (says Seeley) have been conquered by an army of which, on the average, about a fifth part was English. India can hardly be said to have been conquered at all by foreigners; she was rather conquered by herself. If we were justified, which we are not, in personifying India as we personify France or England, we could not describe her as overwhelmed by a foreign enemy; we should rather have to say that she elected to put an end to anarchy by submitting to a single government, even though that government were in the hands of foreigners.' [1]

In other words, India is an English possession because the peoples of India were incapable of cohesion, the nations of India incapable of internationalism.

The peoples of India include some of the best fighting stock in the world. But they fought one another: the pugnacity and material power they personified was the force used by their conquerors for their subjection.

I will venture to quote what I wrote some years ago touching Seeley's moral:—

'Our successful defeat of tyranny depends upon such a development of the sense of patriotism among the democratic nations that it will attach itself rather to the conception of the unity of all free co-operative societies, than to the mere geographical and racial divisions; a development that will enable it to organise itself as a cohesive power for the defence of that ideal, by the use of all the forces, moral and material, which it wields.

[1] *The Expansion of England*, p. 202.

'That unity is impossible on the basis of the old policies, the European statecraft of the past. For that assumes a condition of the world in which each State must look for its national security to its own isolated strength; and such assumption compels each member, as a measure of national self-preservation, and so justifiably, to take precaution against drifting into a position of inferior power, compels it, that is, to enter into a competition for the sources of strength—territory and strategic position. Such a condition will inevitably, in the case of any considerable alliance, produce a situation in which some of its members will be brought into conflict by claims for the same territory. In the end, that will inevitably disrupt the Alliance.

'The price of the preservation of nationality is a workable internationalism. If this latter is not possible then the smaller nationalities are doomed. Thus, though internationalism may not be in the case of every member of the Alliance the object of war, it is the condition of its success.'

CHAPTER V

PATRIOTISM AND POWER IN WAR AND PEACE

In the preceding chapter attention has been called to a phenomenon which is nothing short of a 'moral miracle' if our ordinary reading of war psychology is correct. The phenomenon in question is the very definite and sudden worsening of Anglo-American relations, following upon common suffering on the same battle-fields, our soldiers fighting side by side; an experience which we commonly assume should weld friendship as nothing else could.[1]

This miracle has its replica within the nation itself: intense industrial strife, class warfare, revolution, embittered rivalries, following upon a war which in its early days our moralists almost to a man declared at least to have this great consolation, that it achieved the moral unity of the nation. Pastor and poet, statesman and professor alike rejoiced in this spiritual consolidation which dangers faced in common had brought about. Never again was the nation to be riven by the old differences. None was now for party and all were for the State. We had achieved the *'union sacrée'* . . . 'duke's son,

[1] The assumption marks even post-war rhetoric. M. Millerand's message to the Senate and Chamber upon his election as President of the Republic says: 'True to the Alliances for ever cemented by blood shed in common,' France will strictly enforce the Treaty of Versailles, 'a new charter of Europe and the World.' (*Times,* Sept. 27th, 1920). The passage is typical of the moral fact dealt with in this chapter. M. Millerand knows, his hearers know, that the war Alliance 'for ever cemented by blood shed in common,' has already ceased to exist. But the admission of this patent fact would be fatal to the 'blood' heroics.

cook's son.' On this ground alone many a bishop has found (in war time) the moral justification of war.[1]

Now no one can pretend that this sacred union has really survived the War. The extraordinary contrast between the disunity with which we finish war and the unity with which we begin it, is a disturbing thought when we recollect that the country cannot always be at war, if only because peace is necessary as a preparation for war, for the creation of things for war to destroy. It becomes still more disturbing when we add to this post-war change another even more remarkable, which will be dealt with presently: the objects for which at the beginning of a war we are ready to die—ideals like democracy, freedom from military regimentation and the suppression of military terrorism, the rights of small nations—are things about which at the end of the War we are utterly indifferent. It would seem either that these are not the things that really stirred us—that our feelings had some other unsuspected origin—or that war has destroyed our feeling for them.

Note this juxtaposition of events. We have had in Europe millions of men in every belligerent country showing unfathomable capacity for disinterested service. Millions of youngsters—just ordinary folk—gave the final and greatest sacrifice without hesitation and without question. They faced agony, hardship, death, with no hope or promise of reward save that of duty discharged. And, very rightly, we acclaim them as heroes. They have shown without any sort of doubt

[1] Dr L. P. Jacks, Editor of *The Hibbert Journal,* tells us that before the War the English nation, regarded from the moral point of view, was a scene of 'indescribable confusion; a moral chaos.' But there has come to it 'the peace of mind that comes to every man who, after tossing about among uncertainties, finds at last a mission, a cause to which he can devote himself.' For this reason, he says, the War has actually made the English people happier than they were before: 'brighter, more cheerful. The Englishman worries less about himself. . . . The tone and substance of conversation are better. . . . There is more health in our souls and perhaps in our bodies.' And he tells how the War cured a friend of insomnia. (*The Peacefulness of Being at War, New Republic,* September 11, 1915).

that they are ready to die for their country's cause or for some even greater cause—human freedom, the rights of a small nation, democracy, or the principle of nationality, or to resist a barbarous morality which can tolerate the making of unprovoked war for a monarchy's ambition or the greed of an autocratic clique.

And, indeed, whatever our final conclusion, the spectacle of vast sacrifices so readily made is, in its ultimate meaning one of infinite inspiration and hope. But the War's immediate sequel puts certain questions to us that we cannot shirk. For note what follows.

After some years the men who could thus sacrifice themselves, return home—to Italy, or France, or Britain—and exchange khaki for the miner's overall or the railway worker's uniform. And it would then seem that at that moment their attitude to their country and their country's attitude to them undergo a wonderful change. They are ready—so at least we are told by a Press which for five years had spoken of them daily as heroes, saints, and gentlemen—through their miners' or railway Unions to make war upon, instead of for, that community which yesterday they served so devotedly. Within a few months of the close of this War which was to unify the nation as it had never been unified before (the story is the same whichever belligerent you may choose) there appear divisions and fissures, disruptions and revolutions, more disturbing than have been revealed for generations.

Our extreme nervousness about the danger of Bolshevist propaganda shows that we believe that these men, yesterday ready to die for their country, are now capable of exposing it to every sort of horror.

Or take another aspect of it. During the War fashionable ladies by thousands willingly got up at six in the morning to scrub canteen floors or serve coffee, in order to add to the comfort of their working-class countrymen—in khaki. They did this, one assumes, from the love of countrymen who risked

their lives and suffered hardship in the execution of duty. It sounds satisfactory until the same countryman ceases fighting and turns to extremely hard and hazardous duties like mining, or fishing in winter-time in the North Sea. The ladies will no longer scrub floors or knit socks for him. They lose all real interest in him. But if it was done originally from 'love of fellow-countrymen,' why this cessation of interest? He is the same man. Into the psychology of that we shall inquire a little more fully later. The phenomenon is explained here in the conviction that its cause throws light upon the other phenomenon equally remarkable, namely, that victory reveals a most astonishing post-war indifference to those moral and ideal ends for which we believed we were fighting. Is it that they never were our real aims at all, or that war has wrought a change in our nature with reference to them?

The importance of knowing what really moves us is obvious enough. If our potential power is to stand for the protection of any principle—nationality or democracy—that object must represent a real purpose, not a convenient clothing for a quite different purpose. The determination to defend nationality can only be permanent if our feeling for it is sufficiently deep and sincere to survive in the competition of other moral 'wishes.' Where has the War, and the complex of desires it developed, left our moral values? And, if there has been a re-valuation, why?

The Allied world saw clearly that the German doctrine—the right of a powerful State to deny national independence to a smaller State, merely because its own self-preservation demanded it—was something which menaced nationality and right. The whole system by which, as in Prussia, the right of the people to challenge the political doctrines of the Government was denied (as by a rigorous control of press and education), was seen to be incompatible with the principles upon which free government in the West has been established. All this had to be destroyed in order that the world might be

made 'safe for democracy.' The trenches in Flanders became 'the frontiers of freedom.' To uphold the rights of small nations, freedom of speech and press, to punish military terror, to establish an international order based on right as against might—these were things for which free men everywhere should gladly die. They did die, in millions. Nowhere so much, perhaps, as in America were these ideals the inspiration which brought that country into the War. She had nothing to gain territorially or materially. If ever the motive to war was an ideal motive, America's was.

Then comes the Peace. And the America which had discarded her tradition of isolation to send two million soldiers on the European continent, 'at the call of the small nation,' was asked to co-operate with others in assuring the future security of Belgium, in protecting the small States by the creation of some international order (the only way in which they ever can be effectively protected); to do it in another form for a small nation that has suffered even more tragically than Belgium, Armenia; definitely to organise in peace that cause for which she went to war. And then a curious discovery is made. A cause which can excite immense passion when it is associated with war, is simply a subject for boredom when it becomes a problem of peace-time organisation. America will give lavishly of the blood of her sons to fight for the small nations; she will not be bothered with mandates or treaties in order to make it unnecessary to fight for them. It is not a question whether the particular League of Nations established at Paris was a good one. The post-war temper of America is that she does not want to be bothered with Europe at all: talk about its security makes the American public of 1920 irritable and angry. Yet millions were ready to die for freedom in Europe two years ago! A thing to die for in 1918 is a thing to yawn over, or to be irritable about, when the war is done.

Is America alone in this change of feeling about the small

State? Recall all that we wrote and talked about the sacredness of the rights of small nations—and still in certain cases talk and write. There is Poland. It is one of the nations whose rights are sacred—to-day. But in 1915 we acquiesced in an arrangement by which Poland was to be delivered, bound hand and foot, at the end of the war, to its worst and bitterest enemy, Czarist Russia. The Alliance (through France, to-day the 'protector of Poland') undertook not to raise any objection to any policy that the Czar's Government might inaugurate in Poland. It was to have a free hand. A secret treaty, it will be urged, about which the public knew nothing? We were fighting to liberate the world from diplomatic autocracies using their peoples for unknown and unavowed purposes. But the fact that we were delivering over Poland to the mercies of a Czarist Government was not secret. Every educated man knew what Russian policy under the Czarist Government would be, must be, in Poland. Was the Russian record with reference to Poland such that the unhampered discretion of the Czarist Government was deemed sufficient guarantee of Polish independence? Did we honestly think that Russia had proved herself more liberal in the treatment of the Poles than Austria, whose Government we were destroying? The implication, of course, flew in the face of known facts: Austrian rule over the Poles, which we proposed to destroy, had proved itself immeasurably more tolerant than the Russian rule which we proposed to re-enforce and render more secure.

And there were Finland and the Border States. If Russia had remained in the War, 'loyal to the cause of democracy and the rights of small nations,' there would have been no independent Poland, or Finland, or Esthonia, or Georgia; and the refusal of our Ally to recognise their independence would not have disturbed us in the least.

Again, there was Serbia, on behalf of whose 'redemption' in a sense, the War began. An integral part of that 'redemp-

tion' was the inclusion of the Dalmatian coast in Serbia—the means of access of the new Southern Slav State to the sea. Italy, for naval reasons, desired possession of that coast, and, without informing Serbia, we undertook to see that Italy should get it. (Italy, by the way, also entered the War on behalf of the principle of Nationality.) [1]

It is not to be supposed, however, that the small State itself, however it may declaim about 'liberty or death,' has, when the opportunity to assert power presents itself, any greater regard for the rights of nationality—in other people. Take Poland. For a hundred and fifty years Poland has called upon Heaven to witness the monstrous wickedness of denying to a people its right to self-determination; of forcing a people under alien rule. After a hundred and fifty years of the martyrdom of alien rule, Poland acquires its freedom. That freedom is not a year old before Poland itself becomes in temper as imperialistic as any State in Europe. It may be bankrupt, racked with typhus and famine, split by bitter factional quarrels, but the one thing upon which all Poles will unite is in the demand for dominion over some fifteen millions of people, not merely non-Polish, but bitterly anti-Polish. Although Poland is perhaps the worst case, all the new small States show a similar disposition: Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia, Rumania, Finland, Greece, have all now their own imperialism, limited only, apparently, by the extent of their power. All these people have fought for the right to national independence; there is not one that is not denying the right to national independence. If every Britain has its Ireland, every Ireland has its Ulster.

But is this belief in Nationality at all? What should we have thought of a Southerner of the old Slave States fulminating against the crime of slavery? Should we have thought his position any more logical if he had explained that

[1] The facts of both the Russian and the Italian bargains are dealt with in more detail in Chap. III.

he was opposed to slavery because he did not want to become a slave? The test of his sincerity would have been, not the conduct he exacted of others, but the conduct he proposed to follow towards others. 'One is a Nationalist,' says Professor Corradini, one of the prophets of Italian *sacro egoismo,* 'while waiting to be able to become an Imperialist.' He prophesies that in twenty years 'all Italy will be Imperialist.' [1]

The last thing intended here is any excuse of German violence by a futile *tu quoque.* But what it is important to know, if we are to understand the real motives of our conduct—and unless we do, we cannot really know where our conduct is leading us, where we are going—is whether we really cared about the 'moral aims of war,' the things for which we thought we were willing to die. Were we not as a matter of fact fighting—and dying—for something else?

Test the nature of our feelings by what was after all perhaps the most dramatised situation in the whole drama: the

[1] Quoted by Mr T. L. Stoddard in an article on Italian Nationalism, in the *Forum,* Sept. 1915. One may hope that the outcome of the War has modified the tendencies in Italy of which he treats. But the quotations he makes from Italian Nationalist writers put Treitschke and Bernhardi in the shade. Here are some. Corradini says: 'Italy must become once more the first nation in the world.' Rocco: 'It is said that all the other territories are occupied. But strong nations, or nations on the path of progress, conquer. . . . territories occupied by nations in decadence.' Luigi Villari rejoices that the cobwebs of mean-spirited Pacifism have been swept away. Italians are beginning to feel, in whatever part of the world they may happen to be, something of the pride of Roman citizens.' Scipione Sighele writes: 'War must be loved for itself. . . To say "War is the most horrible of evils," to talk of war as "an unhappy necessity," to declare that we should "never attack but always know how to defend ourselves," to say these things is as dangerous as to make out-and-out Pacifist and anti-militarist speeches. It is creating for the future a conflict of duties: duties towards humanity, duties towards the Fatherland.' Corradini explains the programme of the Nationalists: 'All our efforts will tend towards making the Italians a warlike race. We will give it a new will; we will instil into it the appetite for power, the need of mighty hopes. We will create a religion—the religion of the Fatherland victorious over the other nations.'

I am indebted to Mr Stoddard for the translations; but they read quite 'true to type.'

fact that in the Western world a single man, or a little junta of military chiefs, could by a word send nations into war, millions to their death; and—worse still in a sense—that those millions would accept the fact of thus being made helpless pawns, and with appalling docility, without question, kill and be killed for reasons they did not even know. It must be made impossible ever again for half a dozen Generals or Cabinet Ministers thus to play with nations and men and women as with pawns.

The War is at last over. And in Eastern Europe, the most corrupt, as it was one of the potentially most powerful of all the military autocracies—that of the Czar—has either gone to pieces from its own rottenness, or been destroyed by the spontaneous uprising of the people. Bold experiments, in entirely new social and economic methods, are attempted in this great community which may have so much to teach the Western world, experiments which challenge not only old political institutions, but old economic ones as well. But the men who were the Czar's Ministers are still in Paris and London, in close but secret confabulation with Allied Governments.

And one morning we find that we are at war with the first Workers' Republic of the world, the first really to try a great social experiment. There had been no declaration, no explanation. President Wilson had, indeed, said that nothing would induce the Allies to intervene. Their behaviour on that point would be the 'acid test' of sincerity. But in Archangel, Murmansk, Vladivostock, the Crimea, on the Polish border, on the shores of the Caspian, our soldiers were killing Russians, or organising their killing; our ships sank Russian ships and bombarded Russian cities. We found that we were supporting the Royalist parties—military leaders who did not hide in the least their intention to restore the monarchy. But again, there is no explanation. But somewhere, for some purpose undefined, killing has been proclaimed. And we kill —and blockade and starve.

The killing and blockading are not the important facts. Whatever may be behind the Russian business, the most disturbing portent is the fact which no one challenges and which indeed is most generally offered as a sort of defence. It is this: Nobody knows what the policy of the Government in Russia is, or was. It is commonly said they had no policy. Certainly it was changeable. That means that the Government does not need to give an explanation in order to start upon a war which may affect the whole future form of Western society. They did not have to explain because nobody particularly cared. Commands for youths to die in wars of unknown purpose do not strike us as monstrous when the commands are given by our own Governments—Governments which notoriously we do not trouble to control. Public opinion as a whole did not have any intense feeling about the Russian war, and not the slightest as to whether we used poison gas, or bombarded Russian cathedrals, or killed Russian civilians. We did not want it to be expensive, and Mr Churchill promised that if it cost too much he would drop it. He admitted finally that it was unnecessary by dropping it. But it was not important enough for him to resign over. And as for bringing anybody to trial for it, or upsetting the monarchy . . .[1]

There is another aspect of our feeling about the Prussian tendencies and temper, to rid the world of which we waged the War.

All America (or Britain, for that matter: America is only a striking and so a convenient example) knew that the Bismarckian persecution of the Socialists, the imprisonment of Bebel, of Liebknecht, the prosecution of newspapers for anti-militarist doctrines, the rigid control of education by the

[1] It is true that the Labour Party, alone of all the parties, did take action, happily effective, against the Russian adventure—after it had gone on in intermittent form for two years. But the above paragraphs refer particularly to the period which immediately succeeded the War, and to a general temper which was unfortunately a fact despite Labour action.

Government, were just the natural prelude to what ended in Louvain and Aerschot, to the shooting down of the civilians of an invaded country. Again, that was why Prussia had to be destroyed in the interest of human freedom and the safety of democracy. The newspapers, the professors, the churches, were telling us all this endlessly for five years. Within a year of the end of the War, America is engaged in an anti-Socialist campaign more sweeping, more ruthless, by any test which you care to apply—the numbers arrested, the severity of the sentences imposed, the nature of the offences alleged—than anything ever attempted by Bismarck or the Kaiser. Old men of seventy (one selected by the Socialist party as Presidential Candidate), young girls, college students, are sent to prison with sentences of ten, fifteen, or twenty years. The elected members of State Legislatures are not allowed to sit, on the ground of their Socialist opinions. There are deportations in whole shiploads. If one takes the Espionage Act and compares it with any equivalent German legislation (the tests applied to school teachers or the refusal of mailing privileges to Socialist papers), one finds that the general principle of control of political opinion by the Government, and the limitations imposed upon freedom of discussion, and the Press, are certainly pushed further by the post-war America than they were by the pre-war Germany—the Germany that had to be destroyed for the precise reason that the principle of government by free discussion was more valuable than life itself.

And as to military terrorism. Americans can see—scores of American papers are saying it every day—that the things defended by the British Government in Ireland are indistinguishable from what brought upon Germany the wrath of Allied mankind. But they do not even know and certainly would not care if they did know, that American marines in Hayti—a little independent State that might one day become the hope and symbol of a subject nationality, an unredeemed race that has suffered and does suffer more at American hands than Pole or

Alsatian ever suffered at German hands—have killed ten times as many Haytians as the Black and Tans have killed Irish. Nor for that matter do Americans know that every week there takes place in their own country—as there has taken place week after week in the years of peace for half a century—atrocities more ferocious than any which are alleged against even the British or the German. Neither of the latter burn alive, weekly, untried fellow-countrymen with a regularity that makes the thing an institution.

If indeed it was the militarism, the terrorism, the crude assertion of power, the repressions of freedom, which made us hate the German, why are we relatively indifferent when all those evils raise their heads, not far away, among a people for whom after all we are not responsible, but at home, near to us, where we have some measure of responsibility?

For indifferent in some measure to those near-by evils we all are.

The hundred million people who make up America include as many kindly, humane, and decent folk as any other hundred million anywhere in the world. They have a habit of carrying through extraordinary and unusual measures—like Prohibition. Yet nothing effective has been done about lynching, for which the world holds them responsible, any more than we have done anything effective about Ireland, for which the world holds us responsible. Their evil may one day land them in a desperate 'subject nationality' problem, just as our Irish problem lands us in political difficulty the world over. Yet neither they nor we can manage to achieve one-tenth of the emotional interest in our own atrocity or oppression, which we managed in a few weeks to achieve in war-time over the German barbarities in Belgium. If we could—if every schoolboy and maid-servant felt as strongly over Balbriggan or Amritsar as they felt over the *Lusitania* and Louvain—our problem would be solved; whereas the action and policy which arose out of our

feeling about Louvain did not solve the evil of military terrorism. It merely made it nearly universal.

It brings us back to the original question. Is it mainly, or at all, the cruelty or the danger of oppression which moves us, which is at the bottom of our flaming indignation over the crimes of the enemy?

We believed that we were fighting because of a passionate feeling for self-rule; for freedom of discussion, of respect for the rights of others, particularly the weak; the hatred of the mere pride of power out of which oppression grows; of the regimentation of minds which is its instrument. But after the War we find that in truth we have no particular feeling about the things we fought to make impossible. We rather welcome them, if they are a means of harassing people that we do not happen to like. We get the monstrous paradox that the very tendencies which it was the object of the War to check, are the very tendencies that have acquired an elusive power in our own country—possibly as the direct result of the War!

Perhaps if we examine in some detail the process of the break-up after war, within the nation, of the unity which marked it during war, we may get some explanation of the other change just indicated.

The unity on which we congratulated ourselves was for a time a fact. But just as certainly the patriotism which prompted the duchess to scrub floors was not simply love of her countrymen, or it would not suddenly cease when the war came to an end. The self-same man who in khaki was a hero to be taken for drives in the duchess's motor-car, became as workman—a member of some striking union, say—an object of hostility and dislike. The psychology revealed here has a still more curious manifestation.

When in war-time we read of the duke's son and the cook's son peeling potatoes into the same tub, we regard this aspect of the working of conscription as something in itself fine and

admirable, a real national comradeship in common tasks at last. Colonel Roosevelt orates; our picture papers give us photographs; the country thrills to this note of democracy. But when we learn that for the constructive purposes of peace —for street-cleaning—the Soviet Government has introduced precisely this method and compelled the sons of Grand Dukes to shovel snow beside common workmen, the same papers give the picture as an example of the intolerable tyranny of socialism, as a warning of what may happen in England if the revolutionists are listened to. That for years that very thing *had* been happening in England for the purposes of war, that we were extremely proud of it, and had lauded it as wholesome discipline and a thing which made conscription fine and democratic, is something that we are unable even to perceive, so strong and yet so subtle are the unconscious factors of opinion. This peculiar psychological twist explains, of course, several things: why we are all socialists for the purposes of war, and why socialism can then give results which nothing else could give; why we cannot apply the same methods successfully to peace; and why the economic miracles possible in war are not possible in peace. And the outcome is that forces, originally social and unifying, are at present factors only of disruption and destruction, not merely internationally, but, as we shall see presently, nationally as well.

When the accomplishment of certain things—the production of shells, the assembling of certain forces, the carriage of cargoes—became a matter of life and death, we did not argue about nationalisation or socialism; we put it into effect, and it worked. There existed for war a will which found a way round all the difficulties of credit adjustment, distribution, adequate wages, unemployment, incapacitation. We could take over the country's railways and mines, control its trade, ration its bread, and decide without much discussion that those things were indispensable for its purposes. But we can do none of these things for the upbuilding of the country in peace time.

The measures to which we turn when we feel that the country must produce or perish, are precisely the measures which, when the war is over, we declare are the least likely to get anything done at all. We could make munitions; we cannot make houses. We could clothe and feed our soldiers and satisfy all their material wants; we cannot do that for the workers. Unemployment in war-time was practically unknown; the problem of unemployment in peace time seems beyond us. Millions go unclothed; thousands of workers who could make clothes are without employment. One speaks of the sufferings of the army of poverty as though they were dispensations of heaven. We did not speak thus of the needs of soldiers in war-time. If soldiers wanted uniforms and wool was obtainable, weavers did not go unemployed. Then there existed a will and common purpose. That will and common purpose the patriotism of peace-time cannot give us.

Yet, again, we cannot always be at war. Women must have time and opportunity to bear and to bring up children, and men to build up a country-side, if only in order to have men for war to slay and things for war to destroy. Patriotism fails as a social cement within the nation at peace, it fails as a stimulus to its constructive tasks; and as between nations, we know it acts as a violent irritant and disruptive force.

We need not question the genuineness of the emotion which moves our duchess when she knits socks for the dear boys in the trenches—or when she fulminates against the same dear boys as working men when they come home. As soldiers she loved them because her hatred of Germans—that atrocious, hostile 'herd'—was deep and genuine. She felt like killing Germans herself. Consequently, to those who risked their lives to fulfil this wish of hers, her affections went out readily enough. But why should she feel any particular affection for men who mine coal, or couple railway trucks, or catch fish in the North Sea? Dangerous as are those tasks, they are not visibly and intimately related to her own fierce emotions. The

men performing them are just workpeople, the relation of whose labour to her own life is not, perhaps, always very clear. The suggestion that she should scrub floors or knit socks for *them* would appear to her as merely silly or offensive.

But unfortunately the story does not end there. During these years of war her very genuine emotions of hate were fed and nourished by war propaganda; her emotional hunger was satisfied in some measure by the daily tale of victories over the enemy. She had, as it were, ten thousand Germans for breakfast every morning. And when the War stopped, certainly something went out of her life. No one would pretend that these flaming passions of five years went for so little in her emotional experience that they could just be dropped from one day to another without something going unsatisfied.

And then she cannot get coal; her projected journey to the Riviera is delayed by a railway strike; she has troubles with servants; faces a preposterous super-tax and death duties; an historical country seat can no longer be maintained and old associations must be broken up; Labour threatens revolution —or her morning paper says it does; Labour leaders say grossly unfair things about dukes. Here, indeed, is a new hostility, a new enemy tribe, on which the emotions cultivated so assiduously during five years, but hungry and unfed since the War, can once more feed and find some satisfaction. The Bolshevist, or the Labour agitator, takes the place of the Hun; the elements of enmity and disruption are already present.

And something similar takes place with the miner, or labour man, in reference to the duchess and what she stands for. For him also the main problem of life had resolved itself during the War into something simple and emotional; an enemy to be fought and overcome. Not a puzzling intellectual difficulty, with all the hesitations and uncertainties of intellectual de-

cision dependent upon sustained mental effort. The rights and wrongs were settled for him; right was our side, wrong the enemy's. What we had to do was to crush him. That done, it would be a better world, his country 'a land fit for heroes to live in.'

On return from the War he does not find quite that. He can, for instance, get no house fit to live in at all. High prices, precarious employment. What is wrong? There are fifty theories, all puzzling. As to housing, he is sometimes told it is his own fault; the building unions won't permit dilution. When the 'high-brows' are all at sixes and sevens, what is a man to think? But it is suggested to him that behind all this is one enemy: the Capitalist. His papers have a picture of him: very like the Hun. Now here is something emotionally familiar. For years he has learned to hate and fight, to embody all problems in the one problem of fighting some definite—preferably personified—enemy. Smash him; get him by the throat, and then all these brain-racking puzzles will clear themselves up. Our side, our class, our tribe, will then be on top, and there will be no real solution until it is. To this respond all the emotions, the whole state of feeling which years of war have cultivated. Once more the problem of life is simple; one of power, domination, the fight for mastery; loyalty to our side, our lot, 'right or wrong.' Workers to be masters, workers who have been shoved and ordered about, to do the shoving and the ordering. Dictatorship of the proletariat. The headaches disappear and one can live emotionally free once more.

There are 'high-brows' who will even philosophise the thing for him, and explain that only the psychology of war and violence will give the emotional drive to get anything done; that only by the myths which mark patriotism can real social change be made. Just as for the hate which keeps war going, the enemy State must be a single 'person,' a collectivity in which any one German can be killed as vengeance or reprisal

for any other,[1] so 'the capitalist class' must be a personality, if class hatred is to be kept alive in such a way as to bring the class war to victory.

But that theory overlooks the fact that just as the nationalism which makes war also destroys the Alliances by which victory can be made effective, so the transfer of the psychology of Nationalism to the industrial field has the same effect of Balkanisation. We get in both areas, not the definite triumph of a cohesive group putting into operation a clear-cut and understandable programme or policy, but the chaotic conflict of an infinite number of groups unable to co-operate effectively for any programme.

If the hostilities which react to the Syndicalistic appeal were confined to the Capitalist, there might be something to be said for it from the point of view of the Labour movement. But forces so purely instinctive, by their very nature repelling the restraint of self-imposed discipline by intelligent foresight of consequences, cannot be the servant of an intelligent pur-

[1] Mr Hartley Manners, the playwright, who produced during the War a book entitled *Hate with a Will to Victory*, writes thus:—

'And in voicing our doctrine of Hate let us not forget that the German people were, and are still, solidly behind him (the Kaiser) in everything he does.' . . .

'The German people are actively and passively with their Government to the last man and the last mark. No people receive their faith and their rules of conduct more fatuously from their rulers than do the German people. Fronting the world they stand as one with their beloved Kaiser. He who builds on a revolution in Germany as a possible ending of the war, knows not what he says. They will follow through any degradation of the body, through any torture of spirit, the tyrants they have been taught from infancy to regard as their Supreme Masters of body and soul.' . . .

And here is his picture of 'the German':—

. . . 'a slave from birth, with no rights as a free man, owing allegiance to a militaristic Government to whom he looks for his very life; crushed by taxation to keep up the military machine; ill-nourished, ignorant, prone to crime in greater measure than the peasants of any other country—as the German statistics of crime show—a degraded peasant, a wretched future, and a loathesome past—these are the inheritances to which the German peasant is born. What type of nature can develop in such conditions? But one—the *brute*. And the four years' commerce of this War has shown the German from prince to peasant as offspring of the one family—the *brute* family.' . . .

pose, they become its master. The hostility becomes more important than the purpose. To the industrial Jingo, as to the nationalist Jingo, all foreigners are potential enemies. The hostile tribe or herd may be constituted by very small differences; slight variations of occupation, interest, race, speech, and—most potently of all perhaps—dogma or belief. Heresy-hunting is, of course, one manifestation of tribal animosity; and a heretic is the person who has the insufferable impudence to disagree with us.

So the Sorelian philosophy of violence and instinctive pugnacity gives us, not the effective drive of a whole movement against the present social order (for that would require order, discipline, self-control, tolerance, and toleration); it gives us the tendency to an infinite splitting of the Labour movement. No sooner does the Left of some party break off and found a new party than it is immediately confronted by its own 'Leftism.' And your dogmatist hates the dissenting member of his own sect more fiercely than the rival sect; your Communist some rival Communism more bitterly than the Capitalist. Already the Labour movement is crossed by the hostilities of Communist against Socialist, the Second International against the Third, the Third against the Fourth; Trades Unionism by the hostility of skilled against unskilled, and in much of Europe there is also the conflict of town against country.

This tendency has happily not yet gone far in England; but here, as elsewhere, it represents the one great danger, the tendency to be watched. And it is a tendency that has its moral and psychological roots in the same forces which have given us the chaos in the international field: The deep human lust for coercion, domination; the irksomeness of toleration, thought, self-discipline.

The final difficulty in social and political discussion is, of course, the fact that the ultimate values—what is the highest good, what is the worst evil—cannot usually be argued about

at all; you accept them, you see that they are good or bad as the case may be, or you don't.

Yet we cannot organise a society save on the basis of some sort of agreement concerning these least common denominators; the final argument for the view that Western Europe had to destroy German Prussianism was that the system challenged certain ultimate moral values common to Western society. On the morrow of the sinking of the *Lusitania* an American writer pointed out that if the cold-blooded slaughter of innocent women and children were accepted as a normal incident of war, like any other, the whole moral standards of the West would then definitely be placed on another plane. That elusive but immeasurably important moral sense, which gives a society sufficient community of aim to make common action possible, would have been radically altered. The ancient world—highly civilised and cultured as much of it was—had a *Sittlichkeit* which made the chattel-slavery of the greater part of the human race an entirely normal—and, as they thought, inevitable—condition of things. It was accepted by the slaves themselves, and it was this acquiescence in the arrangement by both parties to it which mainly accounted for its continuance through a very long period of a very high civilisation. The position of women illustrates the same thing. There are to-day highly developed civilisations in which a man of education buys a wife, or several, as in the West he would buy a race-horse. And the wife, or wives, accept that situation; there can be no change in that particular matter until certain quite 'unarguable' moral values have altered in the minds of those concerned.

The American writer raised, therefore, an extremely important question in relation to the War. Has its total outcome affected certain values of the fundamental kind just indicated? What has been its effect upon social impulses? Has it any direct relation to certain moral tendencies that have succeeded it?

Perhaps the War is now old enough to enable us to face a few quite undeniable facts with some measure of detachment.

When the Germans bombarded Scarborough early in the War, there was such a hurricane of moralisation that one rejoiced that this War would not be marked on our side, at least, by the bombardment of open cities. But when our Press began to print reports of French bombs falling on circus tents full of children, scores being killed, there was simply no protest at all. And one of the humours of the situation was that after more than a year, in which scores of such reports had appeared in the Press, some journalistic genius began an agitation on behalf of 'reprisals' for air raids.[1]

At a time when it seemed doubtful whether the Germans would sign the Treaty or not, and just what would be the form of the Hungarian Government, the *Evening News* printed the following editorial:—

'It might take weeks or months to bring the Hungarian Bolshevists and recalcitrant Germans to book by extensive

[1] The following—which appeared in *The Times* of April 17, 1915—is merely a type of at least thirty or forty similar reports published by the German Army Headquarters: 'In yesterday's clear weather the airmen were very active. Enemy airmen bombarded places behind our positions. Freiburg was again visited, and several civilians, the majority being children, were killed and wounded.' A few days later the Paris *Temps* (April 22, 1915) reproduced the German accounts of French air-raids where bombs were dropped on Kandern, Loerrach, Mulheim, Habsheim, Wiesenthal, Tüblingen, Mannheim. These raids were carried out by squads of airmen, and the bombs were thrown particularly at railway stations and factories. Previous to this, British and French airmen had been particularly active in Belgium, dropping bombs on Zeebrugge, Bruges, Middlekirke, and other towns. One German official report tells how a bomb fell on to a loaded street car, killing many women and children. Another (dated September 7, 1915) contains the following: 'In the course of an enemy aeroplane attack on Lichtervelde, north of Roulers in Flanders, seven Belgian inhabitants were killed and two injured.' A despatch from Zürich, dated Sept. 24, 1915, says: 'At yesterday's meeting of the Stuttgart City Council, the Mayor and Councillors protested vigorously against the recent French raid upon an undefended city. Burgomaster Lautenschlager asserted that an enemy that attacked harmless civilians was fighting a lost cause.'

operations with large forces. It might take but a few days to bring them to reason by adequate use of aircraft.

'Allied airmen could reach Buda-pest in a few hours, and teach its inhabitants such a lesson that Bolshevism would lose its attractions for them.

'Strong Allied aerodomes on the Rhine and in Poland, well equipped with the best machines and pilots, could quickly persuade the inhabitants of the large German cities of the folly of having refused to sign the peace.

'Those considerations are elementary. For that reason they may be overlooked. They are "milk for babes."'[1]

Now the prevailing thesis of the British, and particularly the Northcliffe Press, in reference to Bolshevism, was that it is a form of tyranny imposed by a cruel minority upon a helpless people. The proposal amounts, therefore, either to killing civilians for a form of Government which they cannot possibly help, or to an admission that Bolshevism has the support of the populace, and that as the outcome of our war for democracy we should refuse them the right to choose the government they prefer.

When the Germans bombarded Scarborough and dropped bombs on London, the Northcliffe Press called Heaven to witness (*a*) that only fiends in human form could make war on helpless civilian populations, women, and children; (*b*) that not only were the Huns dastardly baby-killers for making war in that fashion, but were bad psychologists as well, because our anger at such unheard-of devilries would only render our resistance more unconquerable than ever; and (*c*) that no consideration whatever would induce English soldiers to blow women and children to pulp—unless it were as a reprisal. Well, Lord Northcliffe proposed to *commence* a war against Hungarians (as it had already been commenced against the Russians) by such a wholesale massacre of the

[1] March 27th, 1919.

civil population that a Government, which he tells us is imposed upon them against their will, may 'lose its attractions.' This would be, of course, the second edition of the war waged to destroy militarist modes of thought, to establish the reign of righteousness and the protection of the defenceless and the weak.

The *Evening News* is the paper, by the way, whose wrath became violent when it learned that some Quakers and others were attempting to make some provision for the children of interned Austrians and Germans. Those guilty of such 'un-English' conduct as a little mercy and pity extended to helpless children, were hounded in headlines day after day as 'Hun-coddlers,' traitors 'attempting to placate the Hun tiger by bits of cake to its cubs'; and when the War is all over—a year after all the fighting is stopped—a vicar of the English Church opposes, with indignation, the suggestion that his parish should be contaminated by 'enemy' children brought from the famine area to save them from death.[1]

On March 3, 1919, Mr Winston Churchill stated in the House of Commons, speaking of the blockade:—

'. . . This weapon of starvation falls mainly upon the women and children, upon the old and the weak and the poor, after all the fighting has stopped.'

[1] In Drinkwater's play, *Abraham Lincoln*, the fire-eating wife of the war-profiteer, who had been violently abusing an old Quaker lady, is thus addressed by Lincoln:—

'I don't agree with her, but I honour her. She's wrong, but she is noble. You've told me what you think. I don't agree with you, and I'm ashamed of you and your like. You, who have sacrificed nothing babble about destroying the South while other people conquer it. I accepted this war with a sick heart, and I've a heart that's near to breaking every day. I accepted it in the name of humanity, and just and merciful dealing, and the hope of love and charity on earth. And you come to me, talking of revenge and destruction, and malice, and enduring hate. These gentle people are mistaken, but they are mistaken cleanly, and in a great name. It is you that dishonour the cause for which we stand—it is you who would make it a mean and little thing. . . .'

One might take this as a prelude to a change of policy. Not at all: he added that we were 'enforcing the blockade with rigour' and would continue to do so.

Mr Churchill's indication as to how the blockade acts is important. We spoke of it as 'punishment' for Germany's crimes, or Bolshevist infamies, as the case may be. But it did not punish 'Germany' or the Bolshevists.[1] Its penalties are in a peculiar degree unevenly distributed. The country districts escape almost entirely, the peasants can feed themselves. It falls on the cities. But even in the cities the very wealthy and the official classes can as a rule escape. Virtually its whole weight—as Mr Churchill implies—falls upon the urban poor, and particularly the urban child population, the old, the invalids, the sick. Whoever may be the parties responsible for the War, these are guiltless. But it is these we punish.

Very soon after the Armistice there was ample evidence available as to the effect of the blockade, both in Russia and in Central Europe. Officers of our Army of Occupation reported that their men 'could not stand' the spectacle of the suffering around them. Organisations like the 'Save the Children Fund' devoted huge advertisements to familiarising the public with the facts. Considerable sums for relief were raised—but the blockade was maintained. There was no connection between the two things—our foreign policy and the famine in Europe —in the public mind. It developed a sort of moral shock absorber. Facts did not reach it or disturb its serenity.

This was revealed in a curious way at the time of the signature of the Treaty. At the gathering of the representatives,

[1] The official record of the Meeting of the Council of Ten on January 16, 1919, as furnished to the Foreign Relations Committee of the American Senate, reports Mr Lloyd George as saying:—

'The mere idea of crushing Bolshevism by military force is pure madness. . . .

'The Russian blockade would be a "death cordon," condemning women and children to starvation, a policy which, as humane people, those present could not consider.'

the German delegate spoke sitting down. It turned out afterwards that he was so ill and distraught, that he dared not trust himself to stand up. Every paper was full of the incident, as also of the fact that the paper-cutter in front of him on the table was found afterwards to be broken; that he placed his gloves upon his copy of the Treaty; and that he had thrown away his cigarette on entering the room. These were the offences which prompted the *Daily Mail* to say: 'After this no one will treat the Huns as civilised or repentant.' Almost the entire Press rang with the story of 'Rantzau's insult.' But not one paper, so far as I could discover, paid any attention to what Rantzau had said. He said:—

'I do not want to answer by reproaches to reproaches. . . . Crimes in war may not be excusable, but they are committed in the struggle for victory and in the defence of national existence, and passions are aroused which make the conscience of peoples blunt. The hundreds of thousands of non-combatants who have perished since November 11 by reason of the blockade, were killed with cold deliberation, after our adversaries had conquered and victory had been assured them. Think of that when you speak of guilt and punishment.'

No one seems to have noticed this trifle in presence of the heinousness of the cigarette, the gloves, and the other crimes. Yet this was an insult indeed. If true, it shamefully disgraces England—if England is responsible. The public presumably simply did not care whether it was true or not.

A few months after the Armistice I wrote as follows:—

'When the Germans sank the *Lusitania* and slew several hundred women and children, *we* knew—at least we thought we knew—that that was the kind of thing which Englishmen could not do. In all the hates and stupidities, the dirt and heartbreaks of the war, there was just this light on the hor-

izon: that there were certain things to which we at least could never fall, in the name of victory or patriotism, or any other of the deadly masked words that are "the unjust stewards of men's ideas."

'And then we did it. We, too, sank *Lusitanias*. We, too, for some cold political end, plunged the unarmed, the weak, the helpless, the children, the suffering women, to agonising death and torture. Without a tremor. Not alone in the bombing of cities, which we did so much better than the enemy. For this we had the usual excuse. It was war.

'But after the War, when the fighting was finished, the enemy was disarmed, his submarines surrendered, his aeroplanes destroyed, his soldiers dispersed; months afterwards, we kept a weapon which was for use first and mainly against the children, the weak, the sick, the old, the women, the mothers, the decrepit: starvation and disease. Our papers told us—our patriotic papers—how well it was succeeding. Correspondents wrote complacently, sometimes exultingly, of how thin and pinched were all the children, even those well into teens; how stunted, how defective, the next generation would be; and how the younger children, those of seven and eight, looked like children of three and four; and how those beneath this age simply did not live. Either they were born dead, or if they were born alive—what was there to give them? Milk? An unheard-of luxury. And nothing to wrap them in; even in hospitals the new-born children were wrapped in newspapers, the lucky ones in bits of sacking. The mothers were most fortunate when the children were born dead. In an insane asylum a mother wails: "If only I did not hear the cry of the children for food all day long, all day long!" To "bring Germany to reason" we had, you see, to drive mothers out of their reason.

'"It would have been more merciful," said Bob Smillie, "to turn the machine-guns on those children." Put this question to yourself, patriot Englishmen: "Was the sinking of the

Lusitania as cruel, as prolonged, as mean, as merciless a death as this?" And we—you and I—do it every day, every night.

'Here is the *Times* of May 21, half a year after the cessation of war, telling the Germans that they do not know how much more severe we can still make the "domestic results" of starvation, if we really put our mind to it. To the blockade we shall add the "horrors of invasion." The invasion of a country already disarmed is to be marked—when we do it—by horror.

'But the purpose! That justifies it! What purpose? To obtain the signature to the Treaty of Peace. Many Englishmen—not Pacifists, not sentimentalists, not conscientious objectors, or other vermin of that kind, but Bishops, Judges, Members of the House of Lords, great public educators. Tory editors—have declared that this Treaty is a monstrous injustice. Some Englishmen at least think so. But if the Germans say so, that becomes a crime which we shall know how to punish. "The enemy have been reminded already" says the *Times,* proud organ of British respectability, of Conservatism, of distinguished editors and ennobled proprietors, "that the machinery of the blockade can again be put into force at a few hours' notice . . . the intention of the Allies to take military action if necessary. . . . Rejection of the Peace terms now offered them, will assuredly lead to fresh chastisement."

'But will not Mr Lloyd George be able to bring back *signatures?* Will he not have made Peace—permanent Peace? Shall we not have destroyed this Prussian philosophy of frightfulness, force, and hate? Shall we not have proved to the world that a State without military power can trust to the good faith and humanity of its neighbours? Can we not, then, celebrate victory with light hearts, honour our dead and glorify our arms? Have we not served faithfully those ideals of right and justice, mercy and chivalry, for which a whole generation of youth went through hell and gave their lives?'

CHAPTER VI

THE ALTERNATIVE RISKS OF STATUS AND CONTRACT

THE facts of the present situation in Europe, so far sketched, reveal broadly this spectacle: everywhere the failure of national power to indispensable ends, sustenance, political security, nationality, right; everywhere a fierce struggle for national power.

Germany, which successfully fed her expanding population by a system which did not rest upon national power, wrecked that system in order to attempt one which all experience showed could not succeed. The Allied world pilloried both the folly and the wickedness of such a statecraft; and at the peace proceeded to imitate it in every particular. The faith in the complete efficacy of preponderant power which the economic and other demands of the Treaty of Versailles and the policy towards Russia reveal, is already seen to be groundless (for the demands, in fact, are being abandoned). There is in that document an element of *naïveté,* and in the subsequent policy a cruelty which will be the amazement of history—if our race remains capable of history.

Yet the men who made the Treaty, and accelerated the famine and break-up of half a world, including those, like M. Tardieu, who still demand a ruined Germany and an indemnity-paying one, were the ablest statesmen of Europe, experienced, realist, and certainly not morally monsters. They were probably no worse morally, and certainly more practical, than the passionate democracies, American and European, who en-

couraged all the destructive elements of policy and were hostile to all that was recuperative and healing.

It is perfectly true—and this truth is essential to the thesis here discussed—that the statesmen at Versailles were neither fools or villains. Neither were the Cardinals and the Princes of the Church, who for five hundred years, more or less, attempted to use physical coercion for the purpose of suppressing religious error. There is, of course an immeasurably stronger case for the Inquisition as an instrument of social order than there is for the use of competing national military power as the basis of modern European society. And the stronger case for the Inquisition as an instrument of social by a modern statesman when he goes to war. It was less. The inquisitor, in burning and torturing the heretic, passionately believed that he obeyed the voice of God, as the modern statesman believes that he is justified by the highest dictates of patriotism. We are now able to see that the Inquisitor was wrong, his judgment twisted by some overpowering prepossession: Is some similar prepossession distorting vision and political wisdom in modern statecraft? And if so, what is the nature of this prepossession?

As an essay towards the understanding of its nature, the following suggestions are put forward:—

The assertion of national power, domination, is always in line with popular feeling. And in crises—like that of the settlement with Germany—popular feeling dictates policy.

The feelings associated with coercive domination evidently lie near the surface of our natures and are easily excited. To attain our end by mere coercion instead of bargain or agreement, is the method in conduct which, in the order of experiments, our race generally tries first, not only in economics (as by slavery) but in sex, in securing acquiescence to our religious beliefs, and in most other relationships. Coercion is not only the response to an instinct; it relieves us of the trouble and

uncertainties of intellectual decision as to what is equitable in a bargain.

To restrain the combative instinct sufficiently to realise the need of co-operation, demands a social discipline which the prevailing political traditions and moralities of Nationalism and Patriotism not only do not furnish, but directly discourage.

But when some vital need becomes obvious and we find that force simply cannot fulfil it, we then try other methods, and manage to restrain our impulse sufficiently to do so. If we simply must have a man's help, and we find we cannot force him to give it, we then offer him inducements, bargain, enter a contract, even though it limits our independence.

Stable international co-operation cannot come in any other way. Not until we realise the failure of national coercive power for indispensable ends (like the food of our people) shall we cease to idealise power and to put our most intense political emotions (like those of patriotism) behind it. Our traditions will buttress and 'rationalise' the instinct to power until we see that it is mischievous. We shall then begin to discredit it and create new traditions.

An American sociologist (Professor Giddings of Columbia University) has written thus:—

'So long as we can confidently act, we do not argue; but when we face conditions abounding in uncertainty, or when we are confronted by alternative possibilities, we first hesitate, then feel our way, then guess, and at length venture to reason. Reasoning, accordingly, is that action of the mind to which we resort when the possibilities before us and about us are distributed substantially according to the law of chance occurrence, or, as the mathematician would say, in accordance with "the normal curve" of random frequency. The moment the curve is obviously skewed, we decide; if it is obviously skewed from the beginning, by authority, or coercion, our reasoning

is futile or imperfect. So, in the State, if any interest or coalition of interests is dominant, and can act promptly, it rules by absolutist methods. Whether it is benevolent or cruel, it wastes neither time nor resources upon government by discussion; but if interests are innumerable, and so distributed as to offset one another, and if no great bias or overweighting anywhere appears, government by discussion inevitably arises. The interests can get together only if they talk. If power shall be able to dictate, it will also rule, and the appeal to reason will be vain.'

This means that a realisation of interdependence—even though it be subconscious—is the basis of the social sense, the feeling and tradition which make possible a democratic society, in which freedom is voluntarily limited for the purpose of preserving any freedom at all.

It indicates also the relation of certain economic truths to the impulses and instincts that underlie international conflict. We shall excuse or justify or fail to restrain those instincts, unless and until we see that their indulgence stands in the way of the things which we need and must have if society is to live. We shall then discredit them as anti-social, as we have discredited religious fanaticism, and build up a controlling *Sittlichkeit*.

The statement of Professor Giddings, quoted above, leaves out certain psychological facts which the present writer in an earlier work has attempted to indicate. He, therefore, makes no apology for reproducing a somewhat long passage bearing on the case before us:—

'The element in man which makes him capable, however feebly, of choice in the matter of conduct, the one fact distinguishing him from that vast multitude of living things which act unreflectingly, instinctively (in the proper and scientific sense of the word), as the mere physical reaction to external prompting, is something not deeply rooted, since it is the latest

addition of all to our nature. The really deeply rooted motives of conduct, those having by far the greatest biological momentum, are naturally the "motives" of the plant and the animal, the kind that marks in the main the acts of all living things save man, the unreflecting motives, those containing no element of ratiocination and free volition, that almost mechanical reaction to external forces which draw the leaves towards the sun-rays and makes the tiger tear its living food limb from limb.

'To make plain what that really means in human conduct, we must recall the character of that process by which man turns the forces of nature to his service instead of allowing them to overwhelm him. Its essence is a union of individual forces against the common enemy, the forces of nature. Where men in isolated action would have been powerless, and would have been destroyed, union, association, co-operation, enabled them to survive. Survival was contingent upon the cessation of struggle between them, and the substitution therefor of common action. Now, the process both in the beginning and in the subsequent development of this device of co-operation is important. It was born of a failure of force. If the isolated force had sufficed, the union of force would not have been resorted to. But such union is not a mere mechanical multiplication of blind energies; it is a combination involving will, intelligence. If mere multiplication of physical energy had determined the result of man's struggles, he would have been destroyed or be the helpless slave of the animals of which he makes his food. He has overcome them as he has overcome the flood and the storm—by quite another order of action. Intelligence only emerges where physical force is ineffective.

'There is an almost mechanical process by which, as the complexity of co-operation grows, the element of physical compulsion declines in effectiveness, and is replaced by agreement based on mutual recognition of advantage. There is through every step of this development the same phenomenon: intel-

ligence and agreement only emerge as force becomes ineffective. The early (and purely illustrative) slave-owner who spent his days seeing that his slave did not run away, and compelling him to work, realised the economic defect of the arrangement: most of the effort, physical and intellectual, of the slave was devoted to trying to escape; that of the owner, trying to prevent him. The force of the one, intellectual or physical, cancelled the force of the other, and the energies of both were lost so far as productive value was concerned, and the needed task, the building of the shelter or the catching of the fish, was not done, or badly done, and both went short of food and shelter. But from the moment that they struck a bargain as to the division of labour and of spoils, and adhered to it, the full energies of both were liberated for direct production, and the economic effectiveness of the arrangement was not merely doubled, but probably multiplied many times. But this substitution of free agreement for coercion, with all that it implied of contract, of "what is fair," and all that followed of mutual reliance in the fulfilment of the agreement, was *based upon mutual recognition of advantage*. Now, that recognition, without which the arrangement could not exist at all, required, relatively, a considerable mental effort, *due in the first instance to the failure of force*. If the slave-owner had had more effective means of physical coercion, and had been able to subdue his slave, he would not have bothered about agreement, and this embryo of human society and justice would not have been brought into being. And in history its development has never been constant, but marked by the same rise and fall of the two orders of motive; as soon as one party or the other obtained such preponderance of strength as promised to be effective, he showed a tendency to drop free agreement and use force; this, of course, immediately provoked the resistance of the other, with a lesser or greater reversion to the earlier profitless condition.

'This perpetual tendency to abandon the social arrangement

and resort to physical coercion is, of course, easily explainable by the biological fact just touched on. To realise at each turn and permutation of the division of labour that the social arrangement was, after all, the best demanded on the part of the two characters in our sketch, not merely control of instinctive actions, but a relatively large ratiocinative effort for which the biological history of early man had not fitted him. The physical act of compulsion only required a stone axe and a quickness of purely physical movement for which his biological history had afforded infinitely long training. The more mentally-motived action, that of social conduct, demanding reflection as to its effect on others, and the effect of that reaction upon our own position and a conscious control of physical acts, is of modern growth; it is but skin-deep; its biological momentum is feeble. Yet on that feeble structure has been built all civilisation.

'When we remember this—how frail are the ultimate foundations of our fortress, how much those spiritual elements which alone can give us human society are outnumbered by the pre-human elements—is it surprising that those pre-social promptings of which civilisation represents the conquest, occasionally overwhelm man, break up the solidarity of his army, and push him back a stage or two nearer to the brute condition from which he came? That even at this moment he is groping blindly as to the method of distributing in the order of his most vital needs the wealth he is able to wring from the earth; that some of his most fundamental social and political conceptions—those, among others, with which we are now dealing—have little relation to real facts; that his animosities and hatreds are as purposeless and meaningless as his enthusiasms and his sacrifices; that emotion and effort which quantitatively would suffice amply for the greater tasks before him, for the firmer establishment of justice and well-being, for the cleaning up of all the festering areas of moral savagery that remain, are as a simple matter of fact turned to those purposes hardly

at all, but to objects which, to the degree to which they succeed, merely stultify each other?

'Now, this fact, the fact that civilisation is but skin-deep and that man is so largely the unreflecting brute, is not denied by pro-military critics. On the contrary they appeal to it as the first and last justification of their policy. "All your talk will never get over human nature; men are not guided by logic; passion is bound to get the upper hand," and such phrases, are a sort of Greek chorus supplied by the military party to the whole of this discussion.

'Nor do the militarist advocates deny that these unreflecting elements are anti-social; again, it is part of their case that, unless they are held in check by the "iron hand," they will submerge society in a welter of savagery. Nor do they deny—it is hardly possible to do so—that the most important securities which we enjoy, the possibility of living in mutual respect of right because we have achieved some understanding of right; all that distinguishes modern Europe from the Europe of (among other things) religious wars and St. Bartholomew massacres, and distinguishes British political methods from those Turkey or Venezuela, are due to the development of moral forces (since physical force is most resorted to in the less desirable age and area), and particularly to the general recognition that you cannot solve religious and political problems by submitting them to the irrelevant hazard of physical force.

'We have got thus far, then: both parties to the discussion are agreed as to the fundamental fact that civilisation is based upon moral and intellectual elements in constant danger of being overwhelmed by more deeply-rooted anti-social elements. The plain facts of history past and present are there to show that where those moral elements are absent the mere fact of the possession of arms only adds to the destructiveness of the resulting welter.

'Yet all attempts to secure our safety by other than military means are not merely regarded with indifference; they are more

generally treated either with a truly ferocious contempt or with definite condemnation.

'This apparently on two grounds: first, that nothing that we can do will affect the conduct of other nations; secondly, that, in the development of those moral forces which do undoubtedly give us security, government action—which political effort has in view—can play no part.

'Both assumptions are, of course, groundless. The first implies not only that our own conduct and our own ideas need no examination, but that ideas current in one country have no reaction on those of another, and that the political action of one State does not affect that of others. "The way to be sure of peace is to be so much stronger than your enemy that he will not dare to attack you," is the type of accepted and much-applauded "axioms" the unfortunate corollary of which is (since both parties can adopt the rule) that peace will only be finally achieved when each is stronger than the other.

'So thought and acted the man with the stone axe in our illustration, and in both cases the psychological motive is the same: the long-inherited impulse to isolated action, to the solution of a difficulty by some simple form of physical movement; the tendency to break through the more lately acquired habit of action based on social compact and on the mental realisation of its advantage. It is the reaction against intellectual effort and responsible control of instinct, a form of natural protest very common in children and in adults not brought under the influence of social discipline.

'The same general characteristics are as recognisable in militarist politics within the nation as in the international field. It is not by accident that Prussian and Bismarckian conceptions in foreign policy are invariably accompanied by autocratic conceptions in internal affairs. Both are founded upon a belief in force as the ultimate determinant in human conduct; a disbelief in the things of the mind as factors of social control, a disbelief in moral forces that cannot be expressed in "blood

and iron." The impatience shown by the militarist the world over at government by discussion, his desire to "shut up the talking shops" and to govern autocratically, are but expressions of the same temper and attitude.

'The forms which Governments have taken and the general method of social management, are in large part the result of its influence. Most Governments are to-day framed far more as instruments for the exercise of physical force than as instruments of social management.

'The militarist does not allow that man has free will in the matter of his conduct at all; he insists that mechanical forces on the one side or the other alone determine which of two given courses shall be taken; the ideas which either hold, the rôle of intelligent volition, apart from their influence in the manipulation of physical force, play no real part in human society. "Prussianism," Bismarckian "blood and iron," are merely political expressions of this belief in the social field—the belief that force alone can decide things; that it is not man's business to question authority in politics or authority in the form of inevitability in nature. It is not a question of who is right, but of who is stronger. "Fight it out, and right will be on the side of the victor"—on the side, that is, of the heaviest metal or the heaviest muscle, or, perhaps, on that of the one who has the sun at his back, or some other advantage of external nature. The blind material things—not the seeing mind and the soul of man—are the ultimate sanction of human society.

'Such a doctrine, of course, is not only profoundly anti-social, it is anti-human—fatal not merely to better international relations, but, in the end, to the degree to which it influences human conduct at all, to all those large freedoms which man has so painfully won.

'This philosophy makes of man's acts, not something into which there enters the element of moral responsibility and free volition, something apart from and above the mere mechanical force of external nature, but it makes man himself a helpless

slave; it implies that his moral efforts and the efforts of his mind and understanding are of no worth—that he is no more the master of his conduct than the tiger of his, or the grass and the trees of theirs, and no more responsible.

'To this philosophy the "civilist" may oppose another: that in man there is that which sets him apart from the plants and the animals, which gives him control of and responsibility for his social acts, which makes him the master of his social destiny if he but will it; that by virtue of the forces of his mind he may go forward to the completer conquest, not merely of nature, but of himself, and thereby, and by that alone, redeem human association from the evils that now burden it.'

From Balance to Community of Power

Does the foregoing imply that force or compulsion has no place in human society? Not the least in the world. The conclusions so far drawn might be summarised, and certain remaining ones suggested, thus:—

Coercion has its place in human society, and the considerations here urged do not imply any sweeping theory of non-resistance. They are limited to the attempt to show that the effectiveness of political power depends upon certain moral elements usually utterly neglected in international politics, and particularly that instincts inseparable from Nationalism as now cultivated and buttressed by prevailing political morality, must condemn political power to futility. Two broad principles of policy are available: that looking towards isolated national power, or that looking towards common power behind a common purpose. The second may fail; it has risks. But the first is bound to fail. The fact would be self-evident but for the push of certain instincts warping our judgment in favour of the first. If mankind decides that it can do better than the first policy, it will do better. If it decides that it cannot, that

decision will itself make failure inevitable. Our whole social salvation depends upon making the right choice.

In an earlier chapter certain stultifications of the Balance of Power as applied to the international situation were dealt with. It was there pointed out that if you could get such a thing as a real Balance, that would certainly be a situation tempting the hot-heads of both sides to a trial of strength. An obvious preponderance of power on one side might check the temper of the other. A 'balance' would assuredly act as no check. But preponderance has an even worse result.

How in practical politics are we to say when a group has become preponderantly powerful? We know to our cost that military power is extremely difficult of precise estimate. It cannot be weighed and balanced exactly. In political practice, therefore, the Balance of Power means a rivalry of power, because each to be on the safe side wants to be just a bit stronger than the other. The competition creates of itself the very condition it sets out to prevent.

The defect of principle here is not the employment of force. It is the refusal to put force behind a law which may demand our allegiance. The defect lies in the attempt to make ourselves and our own interests by virtue of preponderant power superior to law.

The feature which stood condemned in the old order was not the possession by States of coercive power. Coercion is an element in every good society that we have heretofore known. The evil of the old order was that in case of States the Power was anti-social; that it was not pledged to the service of some code or rule designed for mutual protection, but was the irresponsible possession of each individual, maintained for the express purpose of enabling him to enforce his own views of his own rights, to be judge and executioner in his own case, when his view came into collision with that of others. The old effort meant in reality the attempt on the part of a

group of States to maintain in their own favour a preponderance of force of undefined and unlimited purpose. Any opposing group that found itself in a position of manifest inferiority had in fact to submit in international affairs to the decision of the possessor of preponderant power for the time being. It might be used benevolently; in that case the weaker obtained his rights as a gift from the stronger. But so long as the possession of power was unaccompanied by any defined obligation, there could be no democracy of States, no Society of Nations. To destroy the power of the preponderant group meant merely to transpose the situation. The security of one meant always the insecurity of the other.

The Balance of Power in fact adopts the fundamental premise of the 'might makes right' principle, because it regards power as the ultimate fact in politics; whereas the ultimate fact is the purpose for which the power will be used. Obviously you don't want a Balance of Power between justice and injustice, law and crime; between anarchy and order. You want a preponderance of power on the side of justice, of law and of order.

We approach here one of the commonest and most disastrous confusions touching the employment of force in human society, particularly in the Society of Nations.

It is easy enough to make play with the absurdities and contradictions of the *si vis pacem para bellum* of our militarists. And the hoary falsehood does indeed involve a flouting of all experience, an intellectual astigmatism that almost makes one despair. But what is the practical alternative?

The anti-militarist who disparages our reliance upon 'force' is almost as remote from reality, for all society as we know it in practice, or have ever known it, does rely a great deal upon the instrument of 'force,' upon restraint and coercion.

We have seen where the competition in arming among European nations has led us. But it may be argued: suppose you were greatly to reduce all round, cut in half, say, the

military equipment of Europe, would the power for mutual destruction be sensibly reduced, the security of Europe sensibly greater? 'Adequacy' and 'destructiveness' of armament are strictly relative terms. A country with a couple of battleships has overwhelming naval armament if its opponent has none. A dozen machine-guns or a score of rifles against thousands of unarmed people may be more destructive of life than a hundred times that quantity of material facing forces similarly armed. (Fifty rifles at Amritsar accounted for two thousand killed and wounded, without a single casualty on the side of the troops.) Wars once started, instruments of destruction can be rapidly improvised, as we know. And this will be truer still when we have progressed from poison gas to disease germs, as we almost certainly shall.

The first confusion is this:—

The issue is made to appear as between the 'spiritual' and the 'material'; as between material force, battleships, guns, armies on the one side as one method, and 'spiritual' factors, persuasion, moral goodness on the other side, as the contrary method. 'Force *v.* Faith,' as some evangelical writer has put it. The debate between the Nationalist and the Internationalist is usually vitiated at the outset by an assumption which, though generally common to the two parties, is not only unproven, but flatly contrary to the weight of evidence. The assumption is that the military Nationalist, basing his policy upon material force—a preponderant navy, a great army, superior artillery—can dispense with the element of trust, contract, treaty.

Now to state the issue in that way creates a gross confusion, and the assumption just indicated is quite unjustifiable. The militarist quite as much as the anti-militarist, the nationalist quite as much as the internationalist, has to depend upon a moral factor, 'a contract,' the force of tradition, and of morality. Force cannot operate at all in human affairs without a decision of the human mind and will. Guns do not get pointed and go off without a mind behind them, and as already insisted,

the direction in which the gun shoots is determined by the mind which must be reached by a form of moral suasion, discipline, or tradition; the mind behind the gun will be influenced by patriotism in one case, or by a will to rebellion and mutiny, prompted by another tradition or persuasion, in another. And obviously the moral decision, in the circumstances with which we are dealing, goes much deeper and further back. The building of battleships, or the forming of armies, the long preparation which is really behind the material factor, implies a great deal of 'faith.' These armies and navies could never have been brought into existence and be manœuvred without vast stores of faith and tradition. Whether the army serves the nation, as in Britain or France, or dominates it as in a Spanish-American Republic (or in a somewhat different sense in Prussia), depends on a moral factor: the nature of the tradition which inspires the people from whom the army is drawn. Whether the army obeys its officers or shoots them is determined by moral not material factors, for the officers have not a preponderance of physical force over the men. You cannot form a pirate crew without a moral factor: the agreement not to use force against one another, but to act in consort and combine it against the prey. Whether the military material we and France supplied Russia, and the armies France helped to train, are employed against us or the Germans, depends upon certain moral and political factors inside Russia, certain ideas formed in the minds of certain men. It is not a situation of Ideas against Guns, but of ideas using guns. The confusion involves a curious distortion in our reading of the history of the struggle against privilege and tyranny.

Usually when we speak of the past struggles of the people against tyranny, we have in our minds a picture of the great mass held down by the superior physical force of the tyrant. But such a picture is, of course, quite absurd. For the physical force which held down the people was that which they themselves supplied. The tyrant had no physical force save that

with which his victims furnished him. In this struggle of 'People *v.* Tyrant,' obviously the weight of physical force was on the side of the people. This was as true of the slave States of antiquity as it is of the modern autocracies. Obviously the free minority—the five or ten or fifteen per cent.—of Rome or Egypt, or the governing orders of Prussia or Russia, did not impose their will upon the remainder by virtue of superior physical force, the sheer weight of numbers, of sinew and muscle. If the tyranny of the minority had depended upon its own physical power, it could not have lasted a day. The physical force which the minority used was the physical force of the majority. The people were oppressed by an instrument which they themselves furnished.

In that picture, therefore, which we make of the mass of mankind struggling against the 'force' of tyranny, we must remember that the force against which they struggled was not in the last analysis physical force at all; it was their own weight from which they desired to be liberated.

Do we realise all that this means? It means that tyranny has been imposed, as freedom has been won: through the Mind.

The small minority imposes itself and can only impose itself by getting first at the mind of the majority—the people—in one form or another: by controlling it through keeping knowledge from it, as in so much of antiquity, or by controlling the knowledge itself, as in Germany. It is because the minds of the masses have failed them that they have been enslaved. Without that intellectual failure of the masses, tyranny could have found no force wherewith to impose its burdens.

This confusion as to the relation of 'force' to the moral factor is of all confusions most worth while clearing up: and for that purpose we may descend to homely illustrations.

You have a disorderly society, a frontier mining camp, every man armed, every man threatened by the arms of his neighbour and every man in danger. What is the first need in restoring order? More force—more revolvers and bowie knives? No;

every man is fully armed already. If there exists in this disorder the germ of order some attempt will be made to move towards the creation of a police. But what is the indispensable prerequisite for the success of such an effort? It is the capacity for a nucleus of the community to act in common, to agree together to make the beginnings of a community. And unless that nucleus can achieve agreement—a moral and intellectual problem—there can be no police force. But be it noted well, this first prerequisite—the agreement among a few members necessary to create the first Vigilance Committee—is not force; it is a decision of certain minds determining how force shall be used, how combined. Even when you have got as far as the police, this device of social protection will entirely break down unless the police itself can be trusted to obey the constituted authority, and the constituted authority itself to abide by the law. If the police represents a mere preponderance of power, using that power to create a privileged position for itself or for its employers—setting itself, that is, against the community—you will sooner or later get resistance which will ultimately neutralise that power and produce a mere paralysis so far as any social purpose is concerned. The existence of the police depends upon general agreement not to use force except as the instrument of the social will, the law to which all are party. This social will may not exist; the members of the vigilance committee or town council or other body may themselves use their revolvers and knives each against the other. Very well, in that case you will get no police. 'Force' will not remedy it. Who is to use the force if no one man can agree with the other? All along the line here we find ourselves, whatever our predisposition to trust only 'force,' thrown back upon a moral factor, compelled to rely upon contract, an agreement, before we can use force at all.

It will be noted incidentally that effective social force does not rest upon a Balance of Power: society does not need a Balance of Power as between the law and crime; it wants a

preponderance of power on the side of the law. One does not want a Balance of Power between rival parties in the State. One wants a preponderance of power on behalf of a certain fundamental code upon which all parties, or an immense majority of parties, will be agreed. As against the Balance of Power we need a Community of Power—to use Mr. Wilson's phrase—on the side of a purpose or code of which the contributors to the power are aware.

One may read in learned and pretentious political works that the ultimate basis of a State is force—the army—which is the means by which the State's authority is maintained. But who compels the army to carry out the State's orders rather than its own will or the personal will of its commander? *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* The following passage from an address delivered by the present writer in America may perhaps help to make the point clear:—

'When, after the counting of the votes, you ask Mr Wilson to step down from the President's chair, how do you know he will get down? I repeat, How do you know he will get down? You think that a foolish and fantastic question? But, in a great many interesting American republics, Mexico, Venezuela, or Hayti, he would not get down! You say, "Oh, the army would turn him out." I beg your pardon. It is Mr Wilson who commands the army; it is not the army that commands Mr Wilson. Again, in many American republics a President who can depend on his army, when asked to get out of the Presidency, would reply almost as a matter of course, "Why should I get down when I have an army that stands by me?"

'How do we know that Mr Wilson, able, we will assume, to count on his army, or, if you prefer, some President particularly popular with the army, will not do that? Is it physical force which prevents it? If so, whose? You may say: "If he did that, he knows that the country would raise an army of rebellion to turn him out." Well, suppose it did? You raise

this army, as they would in Mexico, or Venezuela, and the army turns him out. And your man gets into the Presidential chair, and then, when you think he has stolen enough, you vote *him* down. He would do precisely the same thing. He would say: "My dear people, as very great philosophers tell you, the State is Force, and as a great French monarch once said. 'I am the State.' *J'y suis, j'y reste.*". And then you would have to get another army of rebellion to turn *him* out—just as they do in Mexico, Venezuela, Hayti, or Honduras.'

There, then, is the crux of the matter. Every constitution at times breaks down. But if that fact were a conclusive argument for the anarchical arming of each man against the other as preferable to a police enforcing law, there could be no human society. The object of constitutional machinery for change is to make civil war unnecessary.

There will be no advance save through an improved tradition. Perhaps it will be impossible to improve the tradition. Very well, then the old order, whether among the nations of Europe or the political parties of Venezuela, will remain unchanged. More 'force,' more soldiers, will not do it. The disturbed areas of Spanish-America each show a greater number of soldiers to population than States like Massachusetts or Ohio. So in the international solution. What would it have availed if Britain had quadrupled the quantity of rifles to Koltchak's peasant soldiers so long as his land policy caused them to turn their rifles against his Government? Or for France to have multiplied many times the loans made to the Ukraine, if at the same time the loans made to Poland so fed Polish nationalism that the Ukrainians preferred making common cause with the Bolsheviks to becoming satellites of an Imperialist Poland? Do we add to the 'force' of the Alliance by increasing the military power of Serbia, if that fact provokes her to challenge Italy? Do we strengthen it by increasing at one and the same time the military forces of two States—say Poland

and Czecho-Slovakia—if the nationalism which we nurse leads finally to those two States turning their forces one against the other? Unless we know the policy (again a thing of the mind, of opinion) which will determine the use to which guns will be put, it does not increase our security—it may diminish it—to add more guns.

The Alternative Risks

We see, therefore, that the alternatives are not in fact a choice between 'material' and 'spiritual' means. The material can only operate, whether for our defence or against us, by virtue of a spiritual thing, the will. 'The direction in which the gun will shoot'—a rather important point in its effectiveness as a defensive weapon—depends not on the gun but on the mind of the man using it, the moral factor. The two cannot be separated.

It is untrue to say that the knife is a magic instrument, saving the cancer patient's life: it is the mind of the surgeon using the material thing in a certain way which saves the patient's life. A child or savage who, failing to realise the part played by the invisible element of the surgeon's mind, should deem that a knife of a particular pattern used 'boldly' could be depended upon to cure cancer, would merely, of course commit manslaughter.

It is foolish to talk of an absolute guarantee of security by force, as of guarantee of success in surgical operations by perfection of knives. In both cases we are dealing with instruments, indispensable, but not of themselves enough. The mind behind the instrument, technical in one case, social in the other, may in both cases fail; then we must improve it. Merely to go on sharpening the knife, to go on applying, for instance, to the international problem more 'force,' in the way it has been applied in the past, can only give us in intenser degree the present results.

Yet the truth here indicated is perpetually being disregarded, particularly by those who pique themselves on being 'practical.' In the choice of risks by men of the world and realist statesmen the choice which inevitably leads to destruction is for ever being made on grounds of safety; the choice which leads at least in the direction of security is for ever being rejected on the grounds of its danger.

Why is this? The choice is instinctive assuredly; it is not the result of 'hard-headed calculation' though it often professes to be. We speak of it as the 'protective' instinct. But it is a protective instinct which obviously destroys us.

I am suggesting here that, at the bottom of the choice in favour of the Balance of Power or preponderance as a political method, is neither the desire for safety nor the desire to place 'might behind right;' but the desire for domination, the instinct of self-assertion, the anti-social wish to be judge in our own case; and further, that the way out of the difficulty is to discipline this instinct by a better social tradition. To do that we must discredit the old tradition—create a different feeling about it; to which end it is indispensable to face frankly the nature of its moral origins; to look its motives in the face.[1]

It is extremely suggestive in this connection that the 'realist' politician, the 'hard-headed practical man,' disdainful of 'Sunday School standards,' in his defence of national necessity, is quite ready to be contemptuous of national safety and interest

[1] While attempting in this chapter to reveal the essential difference of the two methods open to us, it is hardly necessary to say that in the complexities and cross-currents of human society practical policy can rarely be guided by a single absolute principle. Reference has been made to the putting of the pooled force of the nations behind a principle or law as the alternative of each attempting to use his own for enforcing his own view. The writer does not suppose for an instant that it is possible immediately to draw up a complete Federal Code of Law for Europe, to create a well-defined European constitution and then raise a European army to defend it, or body of police to enforce it. He is probably the last person in the world likely to believe the political ideas of the European capable of such an agile adaptation.

when these latter point plainly to a policy of international agreement as against domination. Agreement is then rejected as pusillanimous, and consideration for national interest as placing 'pocket before patriotism,' We are then reminded, even by the most realist of nationalists, that nations live for higher things than 'profit' or even safety. 'Internationalism,' says Colonel Roosevelt, 'inevitably emasculates its sincere votaries,' and 'every civilisation worth calling such' must be based 'on a spirit of intense nationalism.' For Colonel Roosevelt or General Wood in America as for Mr Kipling, or Mr Chesterton, or Mr Churchill, or Lord Northcliffe, or Mr Bottomley, and a vast host of poets, professors, editors, historians, bishops, publicists of all sorts in England and France, 'Internationalist' and 'Pacifist' are akin to political atheist. A moral consideration now replaces the 'realist.' The metamorphosis is only intelligible on the assumption here suggested that both explanations or justifications are a rationalisation of the impulse to power and domination.

Our political, quite as much as our social, conduct is in the main the result of motives that are mainly unconscious instinct, habit, unquestioned tradition. So long as we find the result satisfactory, well and good. But when the result of following instinct is disaster, we realise that the time has come to 'get outside ourselves,' to test our instincts by their social result. We have then to see whether the 'reasons' we have given for our conduct are really its motives. That examination is the first step to rendering the unconscious motive conscious. In considering, for instance, the two methods indicated in this chapter, we say, in 'rationalising' our decision, that we chose the lesser of two risks. I am suggesting that in the choice of the method of the Balance of Power our real motive was not desire to achieve security, but domination. It is just because our motives are not mainly intellectual but 'instinctive' that the desire for domination is so likely to have played the determining rôle: for few instincts and innate

desires are stronger than that which pushes to 'self-affirmation' —the assertion of preponderant force.

We have indeed seen that the Balance of Power means in practice the determination to secure a preponderance of power. What is a 'Balance?' The two sides will not agree on that, and each to be sure will want it tilted in its favour. We decline to place ourselves within the power of another who may differ from us as to our right. We demand to be stronger, in order that we may be judge in our own case. This means that we shall resist the claim of others to exactly the same thing.

The alternative is partnership. It means trust. But we have seen that the exercise of any form of force, other than that which one single individual can wield, must involve an element of 'trust.' The soldiers must be trusted to obey the officers, since the former have by far the preponderance of force; the officers must be trusted to obey the constitution instead of challenging it; the police must be trusted to obey the authorities; the Cabinet must be trusted to obey the electoral decision; the members of an alliance to work together instead of against one another, and so on. Yet the assumption of the 'Power Politician' is that the method which has succeeded (notably within the State) is the 'idealistic' but essentially unpractical method in which security and advantage are sacrificed to Utopian experiment; while the method of competitive armament, however distressing it may be to the Sunday Schools, is the one that gives us real security. 'The way to be sure of preserving peace,' says Mr Churchill, 'is to be so much stronger than your enemy that he won't dare to attack you.' In other words it is obvious that the way for two people to keep the peace is for each to be stronger than the other.

'You may have made your front door secure' says Marshal Foch, arguing for the Rhine frontier, 'but you may as well make sure by having a good high garden wall as well.'

'Make sure,' that is the note—*si vis pacem*. . . . And he can be sure that 'the average practical man,' who prides himself

on 'knowing human nature' and 'distrusting theories' will respond to the appeal. Every club smoking room will decide that 'the simple soldier' knows his business and has judged human forces aright.

Yet of course the simple truth is that the 'hard-headed soldier' has chosen the one ground upon which all experience, all the facts, are against him. Then how is he able to 'get away with it'—to ride off leaving at least the impression of being a sternly practical unsentimental man of the world by virtue of having propounded an aphorism which all practical experience condemns? Here is Mr Churchill. He is talking to hard-headed Lancashire manufacturers. He desires to show that he too is no theorist, that he also can be hard-headed and practical. And he—who really does know the mind of the 'hard-headed business man'—is perfectly aware that the best road to those hard heads is to propound an arrant absurdity, to base a proposed line of policy on the assumption of a physical impossibility, to follow a will-o'-the-wisp which in all recorded history has led men into a bog.

They applaud Mr Churchill, not because he has put before them a cold calculation of relative risk in the matter of maintaining peace, an indication, where, on the whole, the balance of safety lies; Mr Churchill, of course, knows perfectly well that, while professing to do that, he has been doing nothing of the sort. He has, in reality, been appealing to a sentiment, the emotion which is strongest and steadiest in the 'hard-faced men' who have elbowed their way to the top in a competitive society. He has 'rationalised' that competitive sentiment of domination by putting forward a 'reason' which can be avowed to them and to others.

Colonel Roosevelt managed to inject into his reasons for predominance a moral strenuousness which Mr Churchill does not achieve.

The following is a passage from one of the last important speeches made by Colonel Roosevelt—twice President of the

United States and one of the out-standing figures in the world in his generation:—

'Friends, be on your guard against the apostles of weakness and folly when peace comes. They will tell you that this is the last great war. They will tell you that they can make paper treaties and agreements and guarantees by which brutal and unscrupulous men will have their souls so softened that weak and timid men won't have anything to fear and that brave and honest men won't have to prepare to defend themselves.

'Well, we have seen that all such treaties are worth less than scraps of paper when it becomes to the interests of powerful and ruthless militarist nations to disregard them. . . . After this War is over, these foolish pacifist creatures will again raise their piping voices against preparedness and in favour of patent devices for maintaining peace without effort. Let us enter into every reasonable agreement which bids fair to minimise the chances of war and to circumscribe its area. . . . But let us remember it is a hundred times more important for us to prepare our strength for our own defence than to enter any of these peace treaties, and that if we thus prepare our strength for our own defence we shall minimise the chances of war as no paper treaties can possibly minimise them; and we shall thus make our views effective for peace and justice in the world at large as in no other way can they be made effective.' [1]

Let us dispose of one or two of the more devastating confusions in the foregoing.

First there is the everlasting muddle as to the internationalist attitude towards the likelihood of war. To Colonel Roosevelt one is an internationalist or 'pacifist' because one thinks war will not take place. Whereas probably the strongest motive

[1] Delivered at Portland, Maine, on March 28th, 1918; reported in *New York Times*, March 29th.

of internationalism is the conviction that without it war is inevitable, that in a world of rival nationalisms war cannot be avoided. If those who hate war believe that the present order will without effort give them peace, why in the name of all the abuse which their advocacy brings on their heads should they bother further about the matter?

Secondly, internationalism is assumed to be the *alternative* to the employment of force or power of arms, whereas it is the organisation of force, of power (latent or positive) to a common—an international—end.

Our incurable habit of giving to homely but perfectly healthy and justifiable reasons of conduct a high faluting romanticism sometimes does morality a very ill service. When in political situations—as in the making of a Peace Treaty—a nation is confronted by the general alternative we are now discussing, the grounds of opposition to a co-operative or 'Liberal' or 'generous' settlement are almost always these: 'Generosity' is lost upon a people as crafty and treacherous as the enemy; he mistakes generosity for weakness; he will take advantage of it; his nature won't be softened by mild treatment; he understands nothing but force.

The assumption is that the liberal policy is based upon an appeal to the better side of the enemy; upon arousing his nobler nature. And such an assumption concerning the Hun or the Bolshevik, for instance (or at an earlier date, the Boer or the Frenchman), causes the very gorge of the Roosevelt-Bottomley patriot to rise in protest. He simply does not believe in the effective operation of so remote a motive.

But the real ground of defence for the liberal policy is not the existence of an abnormal if heretofore successfully disguised nobility on the part of the enemy, but of his very human if not very noble fears which, from our point of view, it is extremely important not to arouse or justify. If our 'punishment' of him creates in his mind the conviction that we are certain to use our power for commercial advantage, or that in any case

our power is a positive danger to him, he *will* use his recovered economic strength for the purpose of resisting it; and we should face a fact so dangerous and costly to us.

To take cognisance of this fact, and to shape our policy accordingly is not to attribute to the enemy any particular nobility of motive. But almost always when that policy is attacked, it is attacked on the ground of its 'Sunday School' assumption of the accessibility of the enemy to gratitude or 'softening' in Colonel Roosevelt's phrase.

We reach in the final analysis of the interplay of motive a very clear political pragmatism. Either policy will justify itself, and by the way it works out in practice, prove that it is right.

Here is a statesman—Italian, say—who takes the 'realist' view, and comes to a Peace Conference which may settle for centuries the position of his country in the world—its strength, its capacity for defending itself, the extent of its resources. In the world as he knows it, a country has one thing, and one thing only, upon which it can depend for its national security and the defence of its due rights; and that thing is its own strength. Italy's adequate defence must include the naval command of the Adriatic and a strategic position in the Tyrol. This means deep harbours on the Dalmatian coast and the inclusion in the Tyrol of a very considerable non-Italian population. To take them may, it is true, not only violate the principle of nationality but shut off the new Yugo-Slav nation from access to the sea and exchange one irredentism for another. But what can the 'realist' Italian statesman, whose first duty is to his own country do? He is sorry, but his own nationality and its due protection are concerned; and the Italian nation will be insecure without those frontiers and those harbours. Self-preservation is the law of life for nations as for other living things. You have, unfortunately, a condition in which the security of one means the insecurity of another, and if a statesman in these circumstances has to choose which of the two is to be secure, he must choose his own country.

Some day, of course, there may come into being a League of Nations so effective that nations can really look to it for their safety. Meantime they must look to themselves. But, unfortunately, for each nation to take these steps about strategic frontiers means not only killing the possibility of an effective League: it means, sooner or later, killing the military alliance which is the alternative. If one Alsace-Lorraine could poison European politics in the way it did, what is going to be the effect ultimately of the round dozen that we have created under the treaty? The history of Britain in reference to Arab and Egyptian Nationality; of France in relation to Poland and other Russian border States; of all the Allies in reference to Japanese ambitions in China and Siberia, reveals what is, fundamentally, a precisely similar dilemma.

When the statesmen—Italian or other—insist upon strategic frontiers and territories containing raw materials, on the ground that a nation must look to itself because we live in a world in which international arrangements cannot be depended on, they can be quite certain that the reason they give is a sound one: because their own action will make it so: their action creates the very conditions to which they appeal as the reason for it. Their decision, with the popular impulse of sacred egoism which supports it, does something more than repudiate Mr Wilson's principles; it is the beginning of the disruption of the Alliance upon which their countries have depended. The case is put in a manifesto issued a year or two ago by a number of eminent Americans from which we have already quoted in Chapter III.

It says:—

'If, as in the past, nations must look for their future security chiefly to their own strength and resources, then inevitably, in the name of the needs of national defence, there will be claims for strategic frontiers and territories with raw material which do violence to the principle of nationality. Afterwards those

who suffer from such violations would be opposed to the League of Nations, because it would consecrate the injustice of which they would be the victims. A refusal to trust to the League of Nations, and a demand for "material" guarantees for future safety, will set up that very distrust which will afterwards be appealed to as justification for regarding the League as impracticable because it inspires no general confidence. A bold "Act of Political Faith" in the League will justify itself by making the League a success; but, equally, lack of faith will justify itself by ruining the League.'

That is why, when in the past the realist statesman has sometimes objected that he does not believe in internationalism because it is not practical, I have replied that it is not practical because he does not believe in it.

The prerequisite to the creation of a society is the Social Will. And herein lies the difficulty of making any comparative estimate of the respective risks of the alternative courses. We admit that if the nations would sink their sacred egoisms and pledge their power to mutual and common protection, the risk of such a course would disappear. We get the paradox that there is no risk if we all take the risk. But each refuses to begin. William James has illustrated the position:—

'I am climbing the Alps, and have had the ill luck to work myself into a position from which the only escape is by a terrible leap. Being without similar experience, I have no evidence of my ability to perform it successfully; but hope and confidence in myself make me sure that I shall not miss my aim, and nerve my feet to execute what, without those subjective emotions, would have been impossible.

'But suppose that, on the contrary, the emotions...of mistrust predominate....Why, then, I shall hesitate so long that at last, exhausted and trembling, and launching myself in a moment of despair, I miss my foothold and roll into the abyss. In

this case, and it is one of an immense class, the part of wisdom is to believe what one desires; for the belief is one of the indispensable, preliminary conditions of the realisation of its object. There are cases where faith creates its own justification. Believe, and you shall be right, for you shall save yourself; doubt, and you shall again be right, for you shall perish.'

CHAPTER VII

THE SPIRITUAL ROOTS OF THE SETTLEMENT

'Human Nature is always what it is'

'You may argue as much as you like. All the logic chopping will never get over the fact that human nature is always what it is. Nations will always fight. . . . always retaliate at victory.'

If that be true, and our pugnacities, and hates, and instincts generally, are uncontrollable, and they dictate conduct, no more is to be said. We are the helpless victims of outside forces, and may as well surrender, without further discussion, or political agitation, or propaganda. For if those appeals to our minds can neither determine the direction nor modify the manifestation of our innate instincts, nor influence conduct, one rather wonders at our persistence in them.

Why so many of us find an obvious satisfaction in this fatalism, so patently want it to be true, and resort to it in such convenient disregard of the facts, has been in some measure indicated in the preceding chapter. At bottom it comes to this: that it relieves us of so much trouble and responsibility; the life of instinct and emotion is so easily flowing a thing, and that of social restraints and rationalised decisions so cold and dry and barren.

At least that is the alternative as many of us see it. And if the only alternative to an impulse spending itself in hostilities and hatreds destructive of social cohesion, were the sheer restraint of impulse by calculation and reason; if our choice were

truly between chaos, anarchy, and the perpetual repression of all spontaneous and vigorous impulse—then the choice of a fatalistic refusal to reason would be justifiable.

But happily that is not the alternative. The function of reason and discipline is not to repress instinct and impulse, but to turn those forces into directions in which they may have free play without disaster. The function of the compass is not to check the power of the ship's engines; it is to indicate a direction in which the power can be given full play, because the danger of running on to the rocks has been obviated.

Let us first get the mere facts straight—facts as they have worked out in the War and the Peace.

It is not true that the directions taken by our instincts cannot in any way be determined by our intelligence. 'A man's impulses are not fixed from the beginning by his native disposition: within certain limits they are profoundly modified by his circumstances and way of life.' [1] What we regard as the 'instinctive' part of our character is, again, within large limits very malleable: by beliefs, by social circumstances, by institutions, and above all by the suggestibility of tradition, the work is often of individual minds.

It is not so much the *character* of our impulsive and instinc-

[1] Bertrand Russell: *Principles of Social Reconstruction.*
Mr. Trotter in *Instincts of the Herd in War and Peace,* says:—
'We see one instinct producing manifestations directly hostile to each other—prompting to ever-advancing developments of altruism while it necessarily leads to any new product of advance being attacked. It shows, moreover . . . that a gregarious species rapidly developing a complex society can be saved from inextricable confusion only by the appearance of reason and the application of it to life. (p. 46.)
. . . 'The conscious direction of man's destiny is plainly indicated by Nature as the only mechanism by which the social life of so complex an animal can be guaranteed against disaster and brought to yield its full possibilities. (p. 162.)
. . . 'Such a directing intelligence or group of intelligences would take into account before all things the biological character of man. . . . It would discover when natural inclinations in man must be indulged, and would make them respectable, what inclinations in him must be controlled for the advantage of the species, and make them insignificant.' (p. 162-3.)

tive life that is changed by these influences, as the direction. The elements of human nature may remain unchangeable, but the manifestations resulting from the changing combinations may be infinitely various as are the forms of matter which result from changing combinations of the same primary elements.

It is not a choice between a life of impulse and emotion on the one side, and wearisome repressions on the other. The perception that certain needs are vital will cause us to use our emotional energy for one purpose instead of another. And just because the traditions that have grouped around nationalism turn our combativeness into the direction of war, the energy brought into play by that impulse is not available for the creativeness of peace. Having become habituated to a certain reagent—the stimulus of some personal or visible enemy—energy fails to react to a stimulus which, with a different way of life, would have sufficed. Because we must have gin to summon up our energy, that is no proof that energy is impossible without it. It is hardly for an inebriate to laud the life of instinct and impulse. For the time being that is not the attitude and tendency that most needs encouragement.

As to the fact that the instinctive and impulsive part of our behaviour is dirigible and malleable by tradition and discussion, that is not only admitted, but it is apt to be over-emphasised—by those who insist upon the 'unchangeability of human nature.' The importance which we attached to the repression of pacifist and defeatist propaganda during the War, and of Bolshevist agitation after the War, proves that we believe these feelings, that we allege to be unchangeable, can be changed too easily and readily by the influence of ideas, even wrong ones.

The type of feeling which gave us the Treaty was in a large degree a manufactured feeling, in the sense that it was the result of opinion, formed day by day by a selection only of the facts. For this manufacture of opinion, we consciously created a very elaborate machinery, both of propaganda and of control of news. But that organisation of public opinion,

justifiable in itself perhaps as a war measure, was not guided (as the result shows) by an understanding of what the political ends, which, in the early days of the War, we declared to be ours, would need in the way of psychology. Our machinery developed a psychology which made our higher political aims quite impossible of realisation.

Public opinion, 'human nature,' would have been more manageable, its 'instincts' would have been sounder, and we should have had a Europe less in disintegration, if we had told as far as possible that part of the truth which our public bodies (State, Church, Press, the School) were largely occupied in hiding. But the opinion which dictated the policy of repression is itself the result of refusing to face the truth. To tell the truth is the remedy here suggested.

The Paradox of the Peace

The supreme paradox of the Peace is this:—

We went into the War with certain very definitely proclaimed principles, which we declared to be more valuable than the lives of the men that were sacrificed in their defence. We were completely victorious, and went into the Conference with full power, so far as enemy resistance was concerned, to put those principles into effect.[1] We did not use the victory which our young men had given us to that end, but for enforcing a policy which was in flat contradiction to the principles we had originally proclaimed.

In some respects the spectacle is the most astounding of all history. It is literally true to say that millions of young soldiers gladly gave their lives for ideals to which the survivors,

[1] The opening sentence of a five volume *History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, edited by H. W. V. Temperley, and published under the auspices of the Institute of International Affairs, is as follows:—

'The war was a conflict between the principles of freedom and of autocracy, between the principles of moral influence and of material force, of government by consent and of government by compulsion.'

when they had the power to realise them (again so far as physical force can give us power,) showed complete indifference, sometimes a contemptuous hostility.

It was not merely an act of the statesmen. The worst features of the Treaty were imposed by popular feeling—put into the Treaty by statesmen who did not believe in them, and only included them in order to satisfy public opinion. The policy of President Wilson failed in part because of the humane and internationalist opinion of the America of 1916 had become the fiercely chauvinist and coercive opinion of 1919, repudiating the President's efforts.

Part of the story of these transformations has been told in the preceding pages. Let us summarise the story as a whole.

We saw at the beginning of the War a real feeling for the right of peoples to choose their own form of government, for the principle of nationality. At the end of the War we deny that right in half a score of cases,[1] where it suits our momentary political or military interest. The very justification of 'necessity,' which shocks our conscience when put forward by the enemy, is the one we invoke callously at the peace—or before it, as when we agree to allow Czarist Russia to do what she will with Poland, and Italy with Serbia. Having sacrificed the small State to Russia in 1916, we are prepared to sacrifice Russia to the small State in 1919, by encouraging the formation of border independencies, which, if complete independencies, must throttle Russia, and which no 'White' Russian would accept. While encouraging the lesser States to make war on Russia, we subsidise White Russian military leaders who will certainly destroy the small States if successful. We entered

[1] Foremost as examples stand out the claims of German Austria to federate with Germany; the German population of the Southern Tyrol with Austria; the Bohemian Germans with Austria; the Transylvanian Magyars with Hungary; the Bulgarians of Macedonia, the Bulgarians of the Dobrudja, and the Bulgarians of Western Thrace with Bulgaria; the Serbs of the Serbian Banat with Yugo-Slavia; the Lithuanians and Ukrainians for freedom from Polish dominion.

the War for the destruction of militarism, and to make disarmament possible, declaring that German arms were the cause of our arms; and having destroyed German arms, we make ours greater than they were before the War, and introduce such new elements as the systematic arming of African savages for European warfare. We fought to make the secret bringing about of war by military or diplomatic cliques impossible, and after the Armistice the decision to wage war on the Russian Republic is made without even public knowledge, in opposition to sections in the Cabinets concerned, by cliques of whose composition the public is completely ignorant.[1] The invasion of Russia from the north, south, east, and west, by European, Asiatic, and negro troops, is made without a declaration of war, after a solemn statement by the chief spokesman of the Allies that there should be no invasion. Having declared, during the War, on a score of occasions, that we were not fighting against any right or interest of the German people[2] —or the German people at all—because we realised that only by ensuring that right and interest ourselves could we turn Germany from the ways of the past, at the peace we impose conditions which make it impossible for the German people

[1] We know now (see the interview with M. Paderewski in the *New York World*) that we compelled Poland to remain at war when she wanted to make peace. It has never been fully explained why the Prinkipo peace policy urged by Mr Lloyd George as early as December 1918 was defeated, and why instead we furnished munitions, tanks, aeroplanes, poison gas, military missions and subsidies in turn to Koltchak, Denikin, Yudenitch, Wrangel, and Poland. We prolonged the blockade—which in the early phases forbade Germany that was starving to catch fish in the Baltic, and stopped medicine and hospital supplies to the Russians—for fear, apparently, of the very thing which might have helped to save Europe, the economic co-operation of Russia and Central Europe.

[2] 'We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war.' . . . 'We are glad . . . to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world, and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small . . . to choose their way of life.' (President Wilson, Address to Congress, April 2nd, 1917).

even adequately to feed their population, and leave them no recourse but the recreation of their power. Having promised at the Armistice not to use our power for the purpose of preventing the due feeding of Germany, we continue for months a blockade which, even by the testimony of our own officials, creates famine conditions and literally kills very many of the children.

At the beginning of the War, our statesmen, if not our public, had some rudimentary sense of the economic unity of mankind, of our need of one another's work, and the idea of blockading half a world in time of dire scarcity would have appalled them. Yet at the Armistice it was done so light-heartedly that, having at last abandoned it, they have never even explained what they proposed to accomplish by it, for, says Mr Maynard Keynes. 'It is an extraordinary fact that the fundamental economic problem of a Europe starving and disintegrating before their eyes, was the one question in which it was impossible to arouse the interest of the Four.'[1] At the beginning of the War we invoked high heaven to witness the danger and anomaly of autocratic government in our day. We were fighting for Parliamentary institutions, 'open Covenants openly arrived at.' After victory, we leave the real settlement of Europe to be made by two or three Prime Ministers, rendering no account of their secret deliberations and discussions to any Parliament until, in practice, it is too late to alter them. At the beginning of the War we were profoundly moved by the wickedness of military terrorism; at its close we employ it—whether by means of starvation, blockade, armed negro savages in German cities, reprisals in Ireland, or the ruthless slaughter of unarmed civilians in India—without creating any strong revulsion of feeling at home. At the beginning of the War we realised that the governmental organisation of hatred with the prostitution of art to 'hymns of hate' was vile and despicable. We copied that governmental organisation of hatred, and famous

[1] *The Economic Consequences of the Peace,* p. 211.

English authors duly produce *our* hymns of hate.[1] We felt at the beginning that all human freedom was menaced by the German theory of the State as the master of man and not as his instrument, with all that means of political inquisition and repression. When some of its worst features are applied at home, we are so indifferent to the fact that we do not even recognise that the thing against which we fought has been imposed upon ourselves.[2]

Many will dissent from this indictment. Yet its most important item—our indifference to the very evils against which we fought—is something upon which practically all witnesses testifying to the state of public opinion to-day agree. It is a commonplace of current discussion of present-day feeling. Take one or two at random, Sir Philip Gibbs and Mr. Sisley Huddleston, both English journalists. (I choose journalists because it is their business to know the nature of the public mind and spirit.) Speaking of the wholesale starvation, unimaginable misery, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, Mr. Huddleston writes:—

'We read these things. They make not the smallest impression on us. Why? How is it that we are not horrified and do not resolve that not for a single day shall any preventable evil exist? How is it, that, on the contrary, for two years we have been cheerfully engaged in intensifying the sum of human suffering? Why are we so heedless? Why are we so callous? Why do we allow to be committed, in our name, a thousand atrocities, and to be written, in our name and for our delectation, a million vile words which reveal the most amazing lack either of feeling or of common sense?

'There have been crimes perpetrated by the politicians—

[1] See quotations from Sir A. Conan Doyle, later in this Chapter.
[2] See, e.g., the facts as to the repression of Socialism in America, Chapter V.

by all the politicians—which no condemnation could fitly characterise. But the peoples must be blamed. The peoples support the war-making politicians. It is my business to follow the course of events day by day, and it is sometimes difficult to stand back and take a general view. Whenever I do so, I am appalled at the blundering or the wickedness of the leaders of the world. Without party prejudices or personal predilections, an impartial observer, I cannot conceive how it is possible to be always blind to the truth, the glaring truth, that since the Armistice we have never sought to make peace, but have sought only some pretext and method for prolonging the War.

'Hate exudes from every journal in speaking of certain peoples—a weary hate, a conventional hate, a hate which is always whipping itself into a passion. It is, perhaps, more strictly, apathy masquerading as hate—which is worst of all. The people are *blasé:* they seek only bread and circuses for themselves. They regard no bread for others as a rather boring circus for themselves.'

Mr. Huddleston was present throughout most of the Conference. This is his verdict:—

'. . . Cynicism soon became naked. In the East all pretence of righteousness was abandoned. Every successive Treaty was more frankly the expression of shameful appetites. There was no pretence of conscience in politics. Force rules without disguise. What was still more amazing was the way in which strife was stirred up gratuitously. What advantage was it, even for a moment, to any one to foment civil war in Russia, to send against the unhappy, famine-stricken country army after army? The result was so obviously to consolidate the Bolshevist Government around which were obliged to rally all Russians who had the spirit of nationality. It seemed as if everywhere we were plotting our

own ruin and hastening our own end. A strange dementia seized our rulers, who thought peace, replenishment of empty larders, the fraternisation of sorely tired nations, ignoble and delusive objects. It appeared that war was for evermore to be humanity's fate.

'Time after time I saw excellent opportunities of universal peace deliberately rejected. There was somebody to wreck every Prinkipo, every Spa. It was almost with dismay that all Europeans who had kept their intelligence unclouded saw the frustration of peace, and heard the peoples applaud the men who frustrated peace. I care not whether they still enjoy esteem: history will judge them harshly and will judge harshly the turbulence which men plumed themselves on creating two years after the War.'

As to the future:—

'If it is certain that France must force another fight with Germany in a short span of years, if she pursues her present policy of implacable antagonism; if it is certain that England is already carefully seeking the European equilibrium, and that a responsible minister has already written of the possibility of a military accord with Germany; if there has been seen, owing to the foolish belief of the Allies in force—a belief which increases in inverse ratio to the Allied possession of effective force—the re-birth of Russian militarism, as there will assuredly be seen the re-birth of German militarism; if there are quarrels between Greece and Italy, between Italy and the Jugo-Slavs, between Hungary and Austria, between every tiny nation and its neighbour, even between England and France, it is because, when war has once been invoked, it cannot easily be exorcised. It will linger long in Europe: the straw will smoulder and at any moment may break into flame. . . .

'This is not lurid imagining: it is as logical as a piece of

Euclidean reasoning. Only by a violent effort to change our fashion of seeing things can it be averted. War-making is now a habit.'

And as to the outcome on the mind of the people:—

'The war has killed elasticity of mind, independence of judgment, and liberty of expression. We think not so much of the truth as of conforming to the tacitly accepted fiction of the hour.[1]

Sir Philip Gibbs renders on the whole a similar verdict. He says:—

'The people of all countries were deeply involved in the general blood-guiltiness of Europe. They made no passionate appeal in the name of Christ or in the name of humanity for the cessation of the slaughter of boys and the suicide of nations, and for a reconciliation of peoples upon terms of some more reasonable argument than that of high explosives. Peace proposals from the Pope, from Germany, from Austria, were rejected with fierce denunciation, most passionate scorn, as "peace plots" and "peace traps," not without the terrible logic of the vicious circle, because indeed, there was no sincerity of renunciation in some of those offers of peace, and the Powers opposite to us were simply trying our strength and our weakness in order to make their own kind of peace, which should be that of conquest. The gamblers, playing the game of "poker," with crowns and armies as their stakes, were upheld generally by the peoples, who would not abate one point of pride, one fraction of hate, one claim of vengeance, though all Europe should fall in ruin, and the last legions of boys be massacred. There was no call from people to people across the frontiers of hostility. "Let us end this

[1] *The Atlantic Monthly,* November 1920.

homicidal mania. Let us get back to sanity and save our younger sons. Let us hand over to justice those who will continue the slaughter of our youth!" There was no forgiveness, no generous instinct, no large-hearted common sense in any combatant nation of Europe. Like wolves they had their teeth in one another's throats, and would not let go, though all bloody and exhausted, until one should fall at the last gasp, to be mangled by the others. Yet in each nation, even in Germany, there were men and women who saw the folly of the war and the crime of it, and desired to end it by some act of renunciation and repentance, and by some uplifting of the people's spirit to vault the frontiers of hatred and the barbed wire which hedged in patriotism. Some of them were put in prison. Most of them saw the impossibility of counteracting the forces of insanity which had made the world mad, and kept silent, hiding their thoughts and brooding over them. The leaders of the nations continued to use mob-passion as their argument and justification, excited it anew when its fires burned low, focussed it upon definite objectives, and gave it a sense of righteousness by the high-sounding watchwords of liberty, justice, honour, and retribution. Each side proclaimed Christ as its captain, and invoked the blessing and aid of the God of Christendom, though Germans were allied with Turks, and France was full of black and yellow men. The German people did not try to avert their ruin by denouncing the criminal acts of their War Lords nor by deploring the cruelties they had committed. The Allies did not help them to do so, because of their lust for bloody vengeance and their desire for the spoils of victory. The peoples shared the blame of their rulers because they were not nobler than their rulers. They cannot now plead ignorance or betrayal by false ideals which duped them, because character does not depend on knowledge, and it was the character of European peoples which failed in the crisis of the world's fate, so that they followed the call-back of the beast in the jungle

rather than the voice of the Crucified One whom they pretended to adore.'

And perhaps most important of all (though the clergy here just stand for the complacent mob mind; they were no worse than the laity), this:—

'I think the clergy of all nations, apart from a heroic and saintly few, subordinated their faith, which is a gospel of charity, to national limitations. They were patriots before they were priests, and their patriotism was sometimes as limited, as narrow, as fierce, and as blood-thirsty as that of the people who looked to them for truth and light. They were often fiercer, narrower, and more desirous of vengeance than the soldiers who fought, because it is now a known truth that the soldiers, German and Austrian, French and Italian and British, were sick of the unending slaughter long before the ending of the war, and would have made a peace more fair than that which now prevails if it had been put to the common vote in the trenches; whereas the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Cologne, and the clergy who spoke from many pulpits in many nations under the Cross of Christ, still stoked up the fires of hate and urged the armies to go on fighting "in the cause of Justice," "for the defence of the Fatherland," "for Christian righteousness," to the bitter end. Those words are painful to write, but as I am writing this book for truth's sake, at all cost, I let them stand.'[1]

From Passion to Indifference: the Result of Drift

A common attitude just now is something like this:—

'With the bitter memory of all that the Allies had suffered strong upon them, it is not astonishing that at the moment of victory an attitude of judicial impartiality proved too much

[1] *Realities of War*, pp. 426-7, 441.

to ask of human nature. The real terms will depend upon the fashion in which the formal terms are enforced. Much of the letter of the Treaty—trial of the Kaiser, etc.—has already disappeared. It is an intolerable priggishness to rake up this very excusable debauch just as we are returning to sobriety.'

And that would be true, if, indeed, we had learned the lesson, and were adopting a new policy. But we are not. We have merely in some measure exchanged passion for lassitude and indifference. Later on we shall plead that the lassitude was as 'inevitable' as the passion. On such a line of reasoning, it is no good reacting by a perception of consequences against a mood of the moment. That is bad psychology and disastrous politics. To realise what 'temperamental politics' have already involved us in, is the first step towards turning our present drift into a more consciously directed progress.

Note where the drift has already carried us with reference to the problem of the new Germany which it was our declared object to create. There were weeks following the Armistice in Germany, when a faithful adherence to the spirit of the declarations made by the Allies during the War would have brought about the utter moral collapse of the Prussianism we had fought to destroy. The Prussian had said to the people: 'Only Germany's military power has stood between her and humiliating ruin. The Allies victorious will use their victory to deprive Germany of her vital rights.' Again and again had the Allies denied this, and Germany, especially young Germany, watched to see which should prove right. A blockade, falling mainly, as Mr Churchill complacently pointed out (months after an armistice whose terms had included a promise to take into consideration the food needs of Germany) upon the feeble, the helpless, the children, answered that question for millions in Germany. Her schools and universities teem with hundreds of thousands stricken in their health, to whom the words 'never again' mean that never more will they put their

trust in the 'naïve innocence' of an internationalism that could so betray them.

The militarism which morally was at so low an ebb at the Armistice, has been rehabilitated by such things as the blockade and its effects, the terms of the Treaty, and by minor but dramatic features like the retention of German prisoners long after Allied prisoners had returned home, and the occupation of German university town by African negroes. So that to-day a League of Nations offered by the Allies would probably be regarded with a contemptuous scepticism—somewhat similar to that with which America now regards the political beatitudes which it applauded in 1916-17.

We are in fact modifying the Treaty. But those modifications will not meet the present situation, though they might well have met the situation in 1918. If we had done then what we are prepared to do *now,* Europe would have been set on the right road.

Suppose the Allies had said in December, 1918 (as they are in effect being brought to say in 1920): 'We are not going to play into the hands of your militarists by demanding the surrender of the Kaiser or the punishment of the war criminals, vile as we believe their offences to be. We are not going to stimulate your waning nationalism by demanding an acknowledgment of your sole guilt. Nor are we going to ruin your industry or shatter your credit. On the contrary, we will start by making you a loan, facilitating your purchases of food and raw materials, and we will admit you into the League of Nations.'

We are coming to that. If it could have been our policy early instead of late, how different this story would have been.

And the tragedy is this: To do it late is to cause it to lose its effectiveness, for the situation changes. The measures which would have been adequate in 1918 are inadequate in 1920. It is the story of Home Rule. In the eighties Ireland would have accepted Gladstonian Home Rule as a basis at

least of co-operation. English and Ulster opinion was not ready even for Home Rule. Forty years later it had reconciled itself to Home Rule. But by the time Britain was ready for the remedy, the situation had got quite beyond it. It now demanded something for which slow-moving opinion was unprepared. So with a League of Nations. The plan now supported by Conservatives would, as Lord Grey has avowed, have assuredly prevented this War if adopted in place of the mere Arbitration plans of the Hague Conference. At that date the present League of Nations Covenant would have been adequate to the situation. But some of the self-same Conservatives who now talk the language of internationalism—even in economic terms—poured contumely and scorn upon those of us who used it a decade or two since. And now, it is to be feared, the Government for which they are ready will certainly be inadequate to the situation which we face.

'An evil idealism and self-sacrificing hates.'

'The cause of this insanity,' says Sir Philip Gibbs, 'is the failure of idealism.' Others write in much the same strain that selfishness and materialism have reconquered the world. But this does not get us very far. By what moral alchemy was this vast outpouring of unselfishness, which sent millions to their death as to a feast (for men cannot die for selfish motives, unless more certain of their heavenly reward than we in the Western world are in the habit of being) turned into selfishness; their high ideals into low desires—if that is what has happened? Can it be a selfishness which ruins and starves us all? Is it selfishness on the part of the French which causes them to adopt towards Germany a policy of vengeance that prevents them receiving the Reparations that they so sorely need? Is it not indeed what one of their writers had called a 'holy hate,' instinctive, intuitive, purged of all calculation of advantage or disadvantage? Would not selfish-

ness—enlightened selfishness—have given us not only a sounder Europe in the material sense, but a more humane Europe, with its hostilities softened by the very fact of contact and co-operation, and the very obviousness of our need for one another? The last thing desired here is to raise the old never-ending question of egoism versus altruism. All that is desired is to point out that a mere appeal to feeling, to a 'sense of righteousness' and idealism, is not enough. We have an illimitable capacity for sublimating our own motives, and of convincing ourselves completely, passionately, that our evil is good. And the greater our fear that intellectual inquiry, some sceptical rationalism, might shake the certitude of our righteousness, the greater the passion with which we shall stand by the guide of 'instinct and intuition.' Can there not be a destructive idealism as well as a social one? What of the Holy Wars? What of the Prussian who, after all, had his ideal, as the Bolshevist has his? What of all fanatics ready to die for their idealism?

It is never the things that are obviously and patently evil that constitute the real menace to mankind. If Prussian nationalism had been nothing but gross lust and cruelty and oppression, as we managed to persuade ourselves during the War that it was, it would never have menaced the world. It did that because it could rally to its end great enthusiasms; because men were ready to die for it. Then it threatened us. Only those things which have some element of good are dangerous.

A Treaty of the character of that Versailles would never have been possible if men had not been able to justify it to themselves on the ground of its punitive justice. The greeds expressed in the annexation of alien territory, and the violation of the principle of nationality, would never have been possible but for the plea of the sacred egoism of patriotism; our country before the enemy's, our country right or wrong. The assertion of sheer immoralism embodied in this last slogan

can be made into the garments of righteousness if only our idealism is instinctive enough.

Some of the worst crimes against justice have been due to the very fierceness of our passion for righteousness—a passion so fierce that it becomes undiscriminating and unseeing. It was the passion for what men believed to be religious truth which gave us the Inquisition and the religious wars; it was the passion for patriotism which made France for so many years, to the astonishment of the world, refuse justice to Dreyfus; it is a righteous loathing for negro crime which has made lynching possible for half a century in the United States, and which prevents the development of an opinion which will insist on its suppression. It is 'the just anger that makes men unjust.' The righteous passion that insists on a criminal's dying for some foul crime, is the very thing which prevents our seeing that the crime was not committed by him at all.

It was something akin to this that made the Treaty of Versailles possible. That is why merely to appeal to idealism and feeling will fail, unless the defect of vision which makes evil appear good is corrected. It is not the feeling which is at fault; it is the defective vision causing feeling to be misused, as in the case of our feeling against the man accused on what seem to us good grounds, of a detestable offence. He is loathsome to our sight, because the crime is loathsome. But when some one else confesses to the crime, our feeling against the innocent man disappears. The direction it took, the object upon which it settled, was due to a misconception.

Obviously that error may occur in politics. Equally certainly something worse may happen. With some real doubt in our mind whether this man is the criminal, we may yet, in the absence of any other culprit, stifle that doubt because of our anger, and our vague desire to have some victim suffer for so vile a crime. Feeling will be at fault, in such a case, as well as vision. And this thing happens, as many a

lynching testifies. ('The innocence of Dreyfus would be a crime,' said a famous anti-Dreyfusard.) Both defects may have played their part in the tragedy of Versailles. In making our appeal to idealism, we assume that it is there, somewhere, to be aroused on behalf of justice; we must assume, consequently, that if it has not been aroused, or has attached itself to wrong purposes, it is because it has not seen where justice lay.

Our only protection against these miscarriages, by which our passion is borne into the wrong channel, against the innocent while the guilty escape, is to keep our minds open to all the facts, all the truth. But this principle, which we have proclaimed as the very foundation stone of our democratic faith, was the first to go when we began the War. The idea that in war time, most particularly, a democracy needs to know the enemy's, or the Pacifist, or even the internationalist and liberal case, would have been regarded as a bad joke. Yet the failure to do just that thing inevitably created a conviction that all the wrong was on one side and all the right on the other, and that the problem of the settlement was mainly a problem of ruthless punishment. One of that temper may have come the errors of the Treaty and the miseries that have flowed from them. It was the virtual suppression of free debate on the purposes and aims of the War and their realisation that delivered public opinion into the keeping of the extremest Jingoes when we came to make the peace.

We create the temper that destroys us

Behind the war-time attitude of the belligerents, when they suppressed whatever news might tell in favour of the enemy, was the conviction that if we could really understand the enemy's position we should not want to fight him. That is probably true. Let us assume that, and assume consequently the need for control of news and discussion. If we are to

come to the control by governments of political belief, as we once attempted control by ecclesiastical authority of religious belief, let us face the fact, and drop pretence about freedom of discussion, and see that the organisation of opinion is honest and efficient. There is a great deal to be said for the suppression of freedom of discussion. Some of the greatest minds in the world have refused to accept it as a working principle of society. Theirs is a perfectly arguable, extremely strong and thoroughly honest case.[1] But virtually to suppress the free dissemination of facts, as we have done not only during, but after the War, and at the same time to go on with our talk about free speech, free Press, free discussion, free democracy is merely to add to the insincerities and falsehoods, which can only end by making society unworkable. We not only disbelieve in free discussion in the really vital crises; we disbelieve in truth. That is one fact. There is another related to it. If we frankly admitted that public opinion has to be 'managed,' organised, shaped, we should demand that it be done efficiently with a view to the achievement of conscious ends, which we should place before ourselves. What happened during the War was that everybody, including the governments who ought to have been free from the domination of the myths they were engaged in creating, lost sight of the ultimate purposes of the War, and of the fact that they were creating forces which would make the attainment of those ends impossible; rob victory, that is, of its effectiveness.

Note how the process works. We say when war is declared: 'A truce to discussion. The time is for action, not words.' But the truce is a fiction. It means, not that talk and propaganda shall cease, only that all liberal contribution to it must cease. The *Daily News* suspends its internationalism, but the *Daily Mail* is more fiercely Chauvinist than ever. We must not debate terms. But Mr Bottomley debates them every week, on the text that Germans are to be extermi-

[1] Is it necessary to say that the present writer does not accept it?

nated like vermin. What results? The natural defenders of a policy even as liberal as that of an Edward Grey are silenced. The function of the liberal Press is suspended. The only really articulate voices on policy are the voices of Lord Northcliffe and Mr Bottomley. On such subjects as foreign policy those gentlemen do not ordinarily embrace all wisdom; there is something to be said in criticism of their views. But in the matter of the future settlement of Europe, to have criticised those views during the War would have exposed the critic to the charge of pro-Germanism. So Chauvinism had it all its own way. For months and years the country heard one view of policy only. The early policy of silence did really impose a certain silence upon the *Daily News* or the *Manchester Guardian;* none whatever upon the *Times* or the *Daily Mail.* None of us can, day after day, be under the influence of such a process without being affected by it.[1] The British public were affected by it. Sir Edward Grey's policy began to appear weak, anæmic, pro-German. And in the end he and his colleagues disappeared, partly, at least, as the result of the very policy of 'leaving it to the Government' upon which they had insisted at the beginning of the War. And the very group which, in 1914, was most insistent that there should be no criticism of Asquith, or McKenna, or Grey, were the very group whose criticisms turned those leaders out of office! While in 1914 it was accepted as proof of treason to say a word in criticism of (say) Grey, by 1916 it had almost become evidence of treason to say a word for him . . . and that while he was still in office!

The history of America's attitude towards the War displays a similar line of development. We are apt to forget that the League of Nations idea entered the realm of practical politics as the result of a great spontaneous popular

[1] The argument is not invalidated in the least by sporadic instances of liberal activity here—an isolated article or two. For iteration is the essence of propaganda as an opinion forming factor.

movement in America in 1916, as powerful and striking as any since the movement against chattel-slavery. A year of war morale resulted, as has already been noted, in a complete reversal of attitude. America became the opponent and Britain the protagonist of the League of Nations.

In passing, one of the astonishing things is that statesmen, compelled by the conditions of their profession to work with the raw material of public opinion, seem blind to the fact that the total effect of the forces which they set in motion will be to transform opinion and render it intractable. American advisers of President Wilson scouted the idea, when it was suggested to them early in the War, that the growth of the War temper would make it difficult for the President to carry out his policy.[1] A score of times the present writer has heard it said by Americans who ought to have known better, that the public did not care what the foreign policy of the country was, and that the President could carry out any policy that he liked. At that particular moment it was true, but quite obviously there was growing up at the time, as the direct result of war propaganda, a fierce Chauvinism, which should have made it plain to any one who observed its momentum, that the notion of President Wilson's policy being put into execution after victory was simply preposterous.

Mr Asquith's Government was thus largely responsible for

[1] In an article in the *North American Review*, just before America's entrance into the War, I attempted to indicate the danger by making one character in an imaginary symposium say: 'One talks of "Wilson's programme," "Wilson's policy." There will be only one programme and one policy possible as soon as the first American soldier sets foot on European soil: Victory. Bottomley and Maxse will be milk and water to what we shall see America producing. We shall have a settlement so monstrous that Germany will offer any price to Russia and Japan for their future help . . . America's part in the War will absorb about all the attention and interest that busy people can give to public affairs. They will forget about these international arrangements concerning the sea, the League of Peace—the things for which the country entered the War. In fact if Wilson so much as tries to remind them of the objects of the War he will be accused of pro-Germanism, and you will have their ginger Press demanding that the "old gang" be "combed out."'

creating a balance of force in public opinion (as we shall see presently) which was responsible for its collapse. Mr Lloyd George has himself sanctioned a jingoism which, if useful temporarily, becomes later an insuperable obstacle to the putting into force of workable policies. For while Versailles could do what it liked in matters that did not touch the popular passion of the moment, in the matters that did, the statesmen were the victims of the temper they had done so much to create. There was a story current in Paris at the time of the Conference: 'You can't really expect to get an indemnity of ten thouand millions, so what is the good of putting it in the Treaty,' an expert is said to have remarked. 'My dear fellow,' said the Prime Minister, 'if the election had gone on another fortnight, it would have been fifty thousand millions.' But the insertion of these mythical millions into the Treaty has not been a joke; it has been an enormous obstacle to the reconstruction of Europe. It was just because public opinion was not ready to face facts in time, that the right thing had to be done at the wrong time, when perhaps it was too late. The effect on French policy has been still more important. It is the illusions concerning illimitable indemnities—directly fostered by the Governments in the early days of the Armistice—still dominating French public opinion, which more than anything else, perhaps, explains an attitude on the part of the French Government that has come near to smashing Europe.

Even minds extraordinarily brilliant, as a rule, miscalculated the weight of this factor of public passion stimulated by the hates of war, and the deliberate exploitation of it for purposes of 'war morale' and propaganda. Thus Mr Wells,[1]

[1] 'If we take the extremist possibility, and suppose a revolution in Germany or in South Germany, and the replacement of the Hohenzollerns in all or part of Germany by a Republic, then I am convinced that for republican Germany there would be not simply forgiveness, but a warm welcome back to the comity of nations. The French, British, Belgians, and Italians, and every civilised force in Russia would tumble over one another in their eager greeting of this return to sanity.' (*What is coming?* p. 198).

writing even after two years of war, predicted that if the Germans were to make a revolution and overthrow the Kaiser, the Allies would 'tumble over each other' to offer Germany generous terms. What is worse is that British propaganda in enemy countries seems to have been based very largely on this assumption.[1] It constituted an elaboration of the offers implicit in Mr Wilson's speeches, that once Germany was democratised there should be, in Mr Wilson's words, 'no reprisal upon the German people, who have themselves suffered all things in this War which they did not choose.' The statement made by the German rulers that Germany was fighting against a harsh and destructive fate at the hands of the victors, was, President Wilson said, 'wantonly false.' 'No one is threatening the peaceful enterprise of the German Empire.' Our propaganda in Germany seems to have been an expansion of this text, while the negotiations which preceded the Armistice morally bound us to a 'Fourteen Points peace' (less the British reservation touching the Freedom of the Seas). The economic terms of the Peace Treaty, the meaning of which has been so illuminatingly explained by the representative of the British Treasury at the Conference, give the measure of our respect for that obligation of honour, once we had the Germans at our mercy.[2]

[1] See the memoranda published in *The Secrets of Crewe House.*

[2] Mr Keynes is not alone in declaring that the Treaty makes of our armistice engagements a 'scrap of paper.' *The Round Table,* in an article which aims at justifying the Treaty as a whole, says: 'Opinions may differ as to the actual letter of the engagements which we made at the Armistice, but the spirit of them is undoubtedly strained in some of the detailed provisions of the peace. There is some honest ground for the feeling manifested in Germany that the terms on which she laid down her arms have not been observed in all respects.'

A very unwilling witness to our obligations is Mr Leo Maxse, who writes (*National Review,* February, 1921):—

'Thanks to the American revelations we are in a better position to appreciate the trickery and treachery of the pre-Armistice negotiations, as well as the hideous imposture of the Paris Peace Conference, which, we now learn for the first time, was governed by the self-denying ordinance of the previous November, when, unbeknown to the countries betrayed, the Fourteen Points had been inextricably woven into

Fundamental Falsehoods and their Outcome

We witnessed both in England and America very great changes in the dynamics of opinion. Not only was one type of public man being brought forward and another thrust into the background, but one group of emotions and of motives of public policy were being developed and another group atrophied. The use of the word 'opinion,' with its implication of a rationalised process of intellectual decision, may be misleading. 'Public opinion' is here used as the sum of the forces which become articulate in a country, and which a government is compelled not necessarily to obey, but to take into account. (A government may bamboozle it or dodge it, but it cannot openly oppose it.)

And when reference is made to the force of ideas— Nationalist or Socialist or Revolutionary—a power which we all admit by our panic fears of defeatist or Red Propaganda, it is necessary to keep in mind the kind of force that is meant. One speaks of Communist or Socialist, Pacifist or Patriotic ideas gaining influence, or creating a ferment. The idea of Communism, for instance, has obviously played some part in the vast upheavals that have followed the War.[1] But in a world where the great majority are still condemned to intense physical labour in order to live at all, where peoples as a whole are overworked, harassed, pre-occupied, it is im-

---

the Armistice. Thus was John Bull effectively 'dished' of every farthing of his war costs.'

As a fact, of course, the self-denying ordinance was not 'unbeknown to the countries betrayed.' The Fourteen Points commitment was quite open; the European Allies could have repudiated them, as, on one point, Britain did.

[1] A quite considerable school, who presumably intend to be taken seriously, would have us believe that the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, the English Trade Union Movement are all the work of a small secret Jewish Club or Junta—their work, that is, in the sense that but for them the Revolutions or Revolutionary movements would not have taken place. These arguments are usually brought by 'intense nationalists' who also believe that sentiments like nationalism are so deeply rooted that mere ideas or theories can never alter them.

possible that ideas like those of Karl Marx should be subjected to elaborate intellectual analysis. Rather is it *an* idea—of the common ownership of wealth or its equal distribution, of poverty being the fault of a definite class of the corporate body—an idea which fits into a mood produced largely by the prevailing conditions of life, which thus becomes the predominating factor of the new public opinion. Now foreign policy is certainly influenced, and in some great crises determined, by public opinion. But that opinion is not the resultant of a series of intellectual analyses of problems of Balkan nationalities or of Eastern frontiers; that is an obvious impossibility for a busy headline-reading public, hard at work all day and thirsty for relaxation and entertainment at night. The public opinion which makes itself felt in Foreign Policy—which, when war is in the balance after a longish period of peace, gives the preponderance of power to the most Chauvinistic elements; which, at the end of a war and on the eve of Treaty-making, as in the December 1918 election, insists upon a rigorously punitive peace—this opinion is the result of a few predominant 'sovereign ideas' or conceptions giving a direction to certain feelings.

Take one such sovereign idea, that of the enemy nation as a person: the conception of it as a completely responsible corporate body. Some offence is committed by a German: 'Germany' did it, Germany including all Germans. To punish any German is to inflict satisfactory punishment for the offence, to avenge it. The idea, when we examine it, is found to be extremely abstract, with but the faintest relation to human realities. 'They drowned my brother,' said an Allied airman, when asked his feelings on a reprisal bombing raid over German cities. Thus, because a sailor from Hamburg drowns an Englishman in the North Sea, an old woman in a garret in Freiburg, or some children, who have but dimly heard of the war, and could not even remotely be held responsible for it, or have prevented it, are killed with a clear con-

science because they are German. We cannot understand the Chinese, who punish one member of a family for another's fault, yet that is very much more rational than the conception which we accept as the most natural thing in the world. It is never questioned, indeed, until it is applied to ourselves. When the acts of British troops in Ireland or India, having an extraordinary resemblance to German acts in Belgium, are taken by certain American newspapers as showing that 'Britain,' (*i.e.* British people) is a bloodthirsty monster who delights in the killing of unarmed priests or peasants, we know that somehow the foreign critic has got it all wrong. We should realise that for some Irishman or Indian to dismember a charwoman or decapitate a little girl in Somersetshire, because of the crime of some Black and Tan in Cork, or English General at Amritsar, would be unadulterated savagery, a sort of dementia. In any case the poor folk in Somerset were not responsible; millions of English folk are not. They are only dimly aware of what goes on in India or Ireland, and are not really able in all matters, by any means, to control their government—any more than the Americans are able to control theirs.

Yet the idea of responsibility attaching to a whole group, as justification for retaliation, is a very ancient idea, savage, almost animal in its origin. And anything can make a collectivity. To one small religious sect in a village it is a rival sect who are the enemies of the human race; in the mind of the tortured negro in the Congo any man, woman, or child of the white world could fairly be punished for the pains that he has suffered.[1] The conception has doubtless arisen out of something protective, some instinct useful, indispensable to

[1] An American playwright has indicated amusingly with what ingenuity we can create a 'collectivity.' One of the characters in the play applies for a chauffeur's job. A few questions reveal the fact that he does not know anything about it. 'Why does he want to be a chauffeur?' 'Well, I'll tell you, boss. Last year I got knocked down by an automobile and badly hurt. And I made up my mind that when I came out of the hospital I'd get a bit of my own back. Get even by knocking over a few guys, see?' A policy of 'reprisals,' in fact.

the race; as have so many of the instincts which, applied unadapted to altered conditions, become socially destructive.

Here then is evidence of a great danger, which can, in some measure, be avoided on one condition: that the truth about the enemy collectively is told in such a way as to be a reminder to us not to slip into injustices that, barbarous in themselves, drag us back into barbarism.

But note how all the machinery of Press control and war-time colleges of propaganda prepared the public mind for the extremely difficult task of the settlement and Treaty-making that lay before it. (It was a task in which everything indicated that, unless great care were taken, public judgment would be so swamped in passion that a workable peace would be impossible.) The more tribal and barbaric aspect of the conception of collective responsibility was fortified by the intensive and deliberate exploitation of atrocities during the years of the War. The atrocities were not just an incident of war-time news: the principal emotions of the struggle came to centre around them. Millions whom the obscure political debate behind the conflict left entirely cold, were profoundly moved by these stories of cruelty and barbarity. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was among those who urged their systematic exploitation on that ground, in a Christmas communication to the *Times*.[1] With reference to stories of German cruelty, he said:–

'Hate has its uses in war, as the Germans have long discovered. It steels the mind and sets the resolution as no other emotion can do. So much do they feel this that Germans are constrained to invent all sorts of reasons for hatred against us, who have, in truth, never injured them in any way save that history and geography both place us before them and their ambitions. To nourish hatred they invent every lie against us, and so they attain a certain national solidity. . . .

[1] December 26th, 1917.

'The bestiality of the German nation has given us a driving power which we are not using, and which would be very valuable in this stage of the war. Scatter the facts. Put them in red-hot fashion. Do not preach to the solid south, who need no conversion, but spread the propaganda wherever there are signs of any intrigue—on the Tyne, the Clyde, in the Midlands, above all in Ireland, and French Canada. Let us pay no attention to platitudinous Bishops or gloomy Deans or any other superior people, who preach against retaliation or whole-hearted warfare. We have to win, and we can only win by keeping up the spirit of resolution of our own people.'

Particularly does Sir Arthur Conan Doyle urge that the munition workers—who were, it will be remembered, largely woman—be stimulated by accounts of atrocities:

'The munition workers have many small vexations to endure, and their nerves get sadly frayed. They need strong elemental emotions to carry them on. Let pictures be made of this and other incidents. Let them be hung in every shop. Let them be distributed thickly in the Sinn Fein districts of Ireland, and in the hot-beds of Socialism and Pacifism in England and Scotland. The Irishman has always been of a most chivalrous nature.'

It is possible that Sinn Fein has now taken to heart this counsel as to the use that may be made of cruelties committed by the enemy in war.

Now there is no reason to doubt the truth of atrocities, whether they concern the horrible ill-treatment of prisoners in war-time of which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle writes, or the burning alive of negro women in peace time in Texas and Alabama, or the flogging of women in India, or reprisals by British soldiers in Ireland, or by Red Russians against White and White against Red. Every story may be true. And if each side told the whole truth, instead of a part of it, these

atrocities would help us towards an understanding of this complex nature of ours. But we never do tell the whole truth. Always in war-time does each side leave out two things essential to the truth: the good done by the enemy and the evil done by ourselves. If that elementary condition of truth were fulfilled, these pictures of cruelty, bestiality, obscenity, rape, sadism, sheer ferocity, might possibly tell us this: 'There is the primeval tiger in us; man's history—and especially the history of his wars—is full of these warnings of the depths to which he can descend. Those ten thousand men and women of pure English stock gloating over the helpless prisoners whom they are slowly roasting alive, are not normally savages.[1] Most of them are kindly and decent folk. These stories of the September massacres of the Terror no more prove French nature to be depraved than the history of the Inquisition, or of Ireland or India, proves Spanish or British nature to be depraved.'

But the truth is never so told. It was not so told during the War. Day after day, month after month, we got these selected stories. In the Press, in the cinemas, in Church services, they were related to us. The message the atrocity carried was not: here is a picture of what human nature is capable of; let us be on our guard that nothing similar marks our history. That was neither the intention nor the result of propaganda. It said in effect and was intended to say:—

'This lecherous brute abusing a woman is a picture of Germany. All Germans are like that; and no people but Germans are like that. That sort of thing never happens in other armies; cruelty, vengeance, and blood-lust are unknown in the Allied forces. That is why we are at war. Remember this at the peace table.'

That falsehood was conveyed by what the Press and the cinema systematically left out. While they told us of every vile thing done by the enemy, they told us of not one act of

[1] A thing which happens about once a week in the United States.

kindness or mercy among all those hundred million during the years of war.

The suppression of everything good of the enemy was paralleled by the suppression of everything evil done by our side. You may search Press and cinemas in vain for one single story of brutality committed by Serbian, Rumanian, Greek, Italian, French, or Russian—until the last in time became an enemy. Then suddenly our papers were full of Russian atrocities. At first these were Bolshevik atrocities only, and of the 'White' troops we heard no evil. Then when later the self-same Russian troops that had fought on our side during the War fought Poland, our papers were full of the atrocities inflicted on Poles.

By the daily presentation during years of a picture which makes the enemy so entirely bad as not to be human at all, and ourselves entirely good, the whole nature of the problem is changed. Admit these premises, and policies like those proposed by Mr Wells become sheer rubbish. They are based on the assumption that Germans are accessible to ordinary human influences like other human beings. But every day for years we have been denying that premise. If the daily presentation of the facts is a true presentation, the *New York Tribune* is right:—

'We shall not get permanent peace by treating the Hun as if he were not a Hun. One might just as well attempt to cure a man-eating tiger of his hankering for human flesh by soft words as to break the German of his historic habits by equally futile kind words. The way to treat a German, while Germans follow their present methods, is as a common peril to all civilised mankind. Since the German employs the method of the wild beast he must be treated as beyond the appeal of generous or kind methods. When one is generous to a German, he plans to take advantage of that generosity to rob or murder; this is his international history, never more

conspicuously illustrated than here in America. Kindness he interprets as fear, regard for international law as proof of decadence; agitation for disarmament has been for him the final evidence of the degeneracy of his neighbours.'[1]

That conclusion is inevitable if the facts are really as presented by the *Daily Mail* for four years. The problem of peace in that case is not one of finding a means of dealing, by the discipline of a common code or tradition, with common shortcomings—violences, hates, cupidities, blindnesses. The problem is not of that nature at all. We don't have these defects; they are German defects. For five years we have indoctrinated the people with a case, which if true, renders only one policy in Europe admissible; either the ruthless extermination of these monsters, who are not human beings at all; or their permanent subjugation, the conversion of Germany into a sort of world lunatic asylum.

When therefore the big public, whether in America or France or Britain, simply will not hear (in 1919) of any League of Nations that shall ever include Germany they are right—if we have been telling them the truth.

Was it necessary thus to 'organise' hate for the purposes of war? Violent partisanship would assuredly assert itself in war-time without such stimulus. And if we saw more clearly the relationship of these instincts and emotions to the formation of policy, we should organise, not their development, but their restraint and discipline, or, that being impossible in sufficient degree (which it may be), organise their re-direction to less anti-social ends.

As it was, it ended by making the war entered upon sincerely, so far as public feeling was concerned, for a principle or policy, simply a war for no purpose beyond victory—and finally for domination at the price of its original purpose. For one who is attracted to the purpose, a thousand are at-

[1] October 16th, 1917.

tracted to the war—the simple success of 'our side.' Partisanship as a motive is animal in its deep, remote innateness. Little boys and girls at the time of the University boat race will choose the Oxford or the Cambridge colours, and from that moment passionately desire the victory of 'their' side. They may not know what Oxford is, or what a University is, or what a boat race is: it does not in the least detract from the violence of their partisanship. You get therefore a very simple mathematical explanation of the increasing subservience of the War's purpose to the simple purpose of victory and domination for itself. Every child can understand and feel for the latter, very few adults for the former.

This competitive feeling, looking to victory, domination, is feeding the whole time the appetite for power. These instincts, and the clamant appetite for domination and coercion are whetted to the utmost and then re-inforced by a moral indignation, which justifies the impulse to retaliation on the ground of punitive justice for inhuman horrors. We propose to establish with this outlaw a relationship of contract! To bargain with him about our respective rights! In the most favourable circumstances it demands a very definite effort of discipline to impose upon ourselves hampering restrictions in the shape of undertakings to another Power, when we believe that we are in a position to impose our will. But to suggest imposing upon ourselves the restrictions of such a relationship with an enemy of the human race . . . The astonishing thing is that those who acquiesced in this deliberate cultivation of the emotions and instincts inseparable from violent partisanship, should ever have expected a policy of impartial justice to come out of that state of mind. They were asking for psychological miracles.

That the propaganda was in large part conscious and directed was proved by the ease with which the flood of atrocity stories could suddenly be switched over from Germans to Russians. During the time that the Russian armies were fighting on our

side, there was not a single story in our Press of Russian barbarity. But when the same armies, under the same officers, are fighting against the Poles, atrocities even more ingenious and villainous than those of the Germans in Belgium suddenly characterise the conduct of the Russian troops. The atrocities are transposed with an ease equal to that with which we transfer our loyalties.[1] When Pilsudski's troops fought against Russia, all the atrocities were committed by them, and of the Russian troops we heard nothing but heroism. When Brusiloff fights under Bolshevik command our papers print long Polish accounts of the Russian barbarities.

We have seen that behind the conception of the enemy as a single person is a falsehood: it is obvious that seventy millions of men, women, and children, of infinitely varying degrees of responsibility, are not a single person. The falsehood may be, in some degree, an unwitting one, a primitive myth that we have inherited from tribal forbears. But if that is so, we should control our news with a view to minimizing the dangers of mythical fallacies, bequeathed to us by a barbaric past. If it is necessary to use them for the purposes of war morale, we

[1] The amazing rapidity with which we can change sides and causes, and the enemy become the Ally, and the Ally the enemy, in the course of a few weeks, approaches the burlesque.

At the head of the Polish armies is Marshal Pilsudski, who fought under Austro-German command, against Russia. His ally is the Ukrainian adventurer, General Petlura, who first made a separate peace at Brest-Litovsk, and contracted there to let the German armies into the Ukraine, and to deliver up to them its stores of grain. These in May 1920 were the friends of the Allies. The Polish Finance Minister at the time we were aiding Poland was Baron Bilinski, a gentleman who filled the same post in the Austrian Cabinet which let loose the world war, insisted hotly on the ultimatum to Serbia, helped to ruin the finances of the Hapsburg dominions by war, and then after the collapse repeated the same operation in Poland. On the other side the command has passed, it is said, to the dashing General Brusiloff, who again and again saved the Eastern front from Austrian and German offensives. He is now the 'enemy' and his opponents our 'Allies.' They are fighting to tear the Ukraine, which means all South Russia, away from the Russian State. The preceding year we spent millions to achieve the opposite result. The French sent their troops to Odessa, and we gave our tanks to Denikin, in order to enable him to recover this region for Imperial Russia.

should drop them when the war is over, and pass round the word, to the Churches for instance, that on the signing of an armistice the moratorium of the Sermon on the Mount comes to an end. As it is, two years after the Armistice, an English Vicar tells his congregation that to bring Austrian children to English, to save them from death by famine, is an unpatriotic and seditious act.

Note where the fundamental dishonesties of our propaganda lead us in the matter of policy, in what we declared to be one of the main objects of the War: the erection of Europe upon a basis of nationality. Our whole campaign implied that the problem resolved itself into the destruction of one great Power, who denied that principle, as against the Allies, who were ready to grant it. How near that came to the truth, the round score of 'unredeemed' nationalities deliberately created by the Allies in the Treaties sufficiently testifies. If we had avowed the facts, that a Europe of completely independent nationalities is not possible, that great populations will not be shut off from the sea, or recognise independent nationalities to the extent of risking economic or political strangulation, we should then necessarily have gone on to devise the limitations and obligations which all must accept and the rights which all must accord. We should have been fighting for a body of principles as the basis of a real association of States. The truth, or some measure of it, would have prepared us all for that limitation of independence without which no nationality can be secure. The falsehood that Germany alone stood in the way of the recognition of nationality, made a treaty really based on that principle (namely, upon all of us consenting to limit our independence) impossible of acceptance by our own opinion. And one falsehood leads to another. Because we refused to be sincere about the inducements which we held out in turn to Italy, Bulgaria, Rumania, Greece, we staggered blindly into the alternative betrayal first of one party, then of another. Just as we were faithless to the principle of nationality when

we acquiesced in the Russian attitude towards Finland and Poland, and the Italian towards Serbia, so later we were to prove faithless to the principle of the Great State when we supported the Border Nationalities in their secession from Russia. We have encouraged and helped States like Ukrainia, Azerbaidjan. But we have been just as ready to stand for 'Great Russia,' if Koltchak appeared to be winning, knowing perfectly well that we cannot be loyal to both causes.

Our defence is apparent enough. It is fairly illustrated in the case of Italy. If Italy had not come into the war, Serbia's prospect of any redemption at all would have been hopeless; we were doing the best we could for Serbia.[1]

Assuredly—but we happened to be doing it by false pretences, sham heroics, immeasurable hypocrisy. And the final effect was to be the defeat of the aims for which we were fighting. If our primary aims had been those we proclaimed, we could no more have violated the principle of nationality to gain an ally, than we could have ceded the Isle of Wight to Germany, and the intellectual rectitude which would have enabled us to see that, would also have enabled us to see the necessity of the conditions on which alone a society of nations is possible.

The indispensable step to rendering controllable those passions now 'uncontrollable' and disrupting Europe, is to tell the truth about the things by which we excuse them. Again, our fundamental nature may not change, any more than it would if we honestly investigated the evidence proving the innocence of the man, whose execution we demand, of the crime which is the cause of our hatred. That investigation would be an effort of the mind; the result of it would be a change in the direction of our feelings. The facts which it is necessary to face are not abstruse or difficult. They are self-evident to the simplest mind. The fact that the 'person' whose

[1] The Russian case is less evident. But only the moral inertia following on a long war could have made our Russian record possible.

punishment we demand in the case of the enemy is not a person at all, either bad or good, but millions of different persons of varying degrees of badness and goodness, many of them—millions—without any responsibility at all for the crime that angers us, this fact, if faced, would alter the nature of our feelings. We should see that we were confronted by a case of mistaken identity. Perhaps we do not face this evidence because we treasure our hate. If there were not a 'person' our hate could have no meaning; we could not hate an 'administrative area,' nor is there much satisfaction in humiliating it and dominating it. We can desire to dominate and humiliate a person, and are often ready to pay a high price for the pleasure. If we ceased to think of national States as persons, we might cease to think of them as conflicting interests, in competition with one another, and begin to think of them instead as associations within a great association.

Take another very simple truth that we will not face: that our arms do, and must do, the things that raise our passions when done by the enemy. Our blockades and bombardments also kill old women and children. Our soldiers, too, the gallant lads who mount our aeroplanes, the sailors who man our blockades, are baby-killers. They must be; they cannot help it if they are to bomb or blockade at all. Yet we never do admit this obvious fact. We erect a sheer falsehood, and then protect ourselves against admitting it by being so 'noble' about it that we refuse to discuss it. We simply declare that in no circumstances could England, or English soldiers, ever make war upon women and children, or even be unchivalrous to them. That is a moral premise beyond or behind which patriotism will not permit our minds to go. If the 'nobility' of attitude had any relation to our real conduct, one would rejoice. When, during the armistice negotiations, the Germans exacted that they should be permitted means, after the surrender of their fleet, of feeding their people, a New York paper declared the condition an insult to the Allies. 'The Germans are prisoners,'

it said, 'and the Allies do not starve prisoners.' But one discovers a few weeks later that these noble gestures are quite compatible with the maintenance of the blockade, on the ground that Germans for their sins ought to be starved. We then become the agents of Providence in punitive justice.

When the late Lord Fisher [1] came out squarely and publicly in defence of the killing of women and children (in the submarine sinking) as a necessary part of war, there seemed a chance for intellectual honesty in the matter; for a real examination of the principles of our conduct. If we faced the facts in this honest sailor-like fashion there was some hope either that we should refuse to descend to reprisals by disembowelling little girls; or, if it should appear that such things are inseparable from war, that it would help to get a new feeling about war. But Lord Fisher complains that the Editor of the paper to which he sent his letter suppressed it from the later editions of his paper for fear it should shock the public. Shock!

You see, *our* shells falling on schools and circuses don't disembowel little girls; our blockades don't starve them. Everybody knows that British shells and British blockades would not do such things. When Britain blockades, pestilence and hunger and torture are not suffering; a dying child is not a dying child. Patriotism draws a shutter over our eyes and ears.

When this degree of self-deception is possible, there is no infamy of which a kindly, humane, and emotionally moral people may not prove themselves capable; no moral contradiction or absurdity which mankind may not approve. Anything may become right, anything may become wrong.

The evil is not only in its resultant inhumanities. It lies much more in the fact that this development of moral blinkers

[1] He complained that I had 'publicly reproved him' for supporting severity in warfare. He was mistaken. As he really did believe in the effectiveness of terrorism, he did a very real service by standing publicly for his conviction.

deprives us of the capacity to see where we are going, and what we are crushing underfoot; and that may well end by our walking over the precipice.

During the War, we formed judgments of the German character which literally make it sub-human. For our praise of the French (during the same period) language failed us. Yet less than twenty years ago the rôles were reversed.[1] The French were the mad dogs, and the Germans of our community of blood.

[1] Here is what the *Times* of December 10th, 1870, has to say about France and Germany respectively, and on the Alsace-Lorraine question:—

'We must say with all frankness that France has never shown herself so senseless, so pitiful, so worthy of contempt and reprobation, as at the present moment, when she obstinately declines to look facts in the face, and refuses to accept the misfortune her own conduct has brought upon her. A France broken up in utter anarchy, Ministers who have no recognised chief, who rise from the dust in their air balloons, and who carry with them for ballast shameful and manifest lies and proclamations of victories that exist only in their imagination, a Government which is sustained by lies and imposture, and chooses rather to continue and increase the waste of lives than to resign its own dictatorship and its wonderful Utopia of a republic; that is the spectacle which France presents to-day. It is hard to say whether any nation ever before burdened itself with such a load of shame. The quantity of lies which France officially and unofficially has been manufacturing for us in the full knowledge that they are lies, is something frightful and absolutely unprecedented. Perhaps it is not much after all in comparison with the immeasurable heaps of delusions and unconscious lies which have so long been in circulation among the French. Their men of genius who are recognised as such in all departments of literature are apparently of opinion that France outshines other nations in a superhuman wisdom, that she is the new Zion of the whole world, and that the literary productions of the French, for the last fifty years, however insipid, unhealthy, and often indeed devilish, contain a real gospel, rich in blessing for all the children of men.

We believe that Bismarck will take as much of Alsace-Lorraine, too, as he chooses, and that it will be the better for him, the better for us, the better for all the world but France, and the better in the long run for France herself. Through large and quiet measures, Count von Bismarck is aiming with eminent ability at a single object; the well-being of Germany and of the world, of the large-hearted, peace-loving, enlightened, and honest people of Germany growing into one nation; and if Germany becomes mistress of the Continent in place of France, which is light-hearted, ambitious, quarrelsome, and over-excitable, it will be the most momentous event of the present day, and all the world must hope that it will soon come about.'

The refusal to face the plain facts of life, a refusal made on grounds which we persuade ourselves are extremely noble, but which in fact result too often in simple falsehood and distortion, is revealed by the common pre-war attitude to the economic situation dealt with in this book. The present writer took the ground before the War that much of the dense population of modern Europe could not support itself save by virtue of an economic internationalism which political ideas (ideas which war would intensify) were tending to make impossible. Now it is obvious that before there can be a spiritual life, there must be a fairly adequate physical one. If life is a savage and greedy scramble over the means of sheer physical sustenance, there cannot be much in it that is noble and inspiring. The point of the argument was, as already mentioned, not that the economic pre-occupation *should* occupy the whole of life, but that it *will* if it is simply disregarded; the way to reduce the economic pre-occupation is to solve the economic problem. Yet these plain and undeniable truths were somehow twisted into the proposition that men went to war because they believed it 'paid,' in the stockbroking sense, and that if they saw it did not 'pay' they would not go to war. The task of attempting to find the conditions in which it will be possible for men to live at all with decent regard for their fellows, without drifting into cannibalistic struggles for sustenance one against another, is made to appear something sordid, a 'usurer's gospel.' And on that ground, very largely, the 'economics' of international policy were neglected. We are still facing the facts. Self deception has become habitual.

President Wilson failed to carry through the policy he had proclaimed, as greater men have failed in similar moral circumstances. The failure need not have been disastrous to the cause which he had espoused. It might have marked merely a step towards ultimate success, if he had admitted the failure. Had he said in effect: 'Reaction has won this battle; we have been guilty of errors and shortcomings, but we shall maintain

the fight, and avoid such errors in future,' he would have created for the generation which followed a clear-cut issue. Whatever there was of courage and sincerity of purpose in the idealism he had created earlier in the War, would have rallied to his support. Just because such a declaration would have created an issue dividing men sharply and even bitterly, it would have united each side strongly; men would have had the two paths clearly and distinctly before their eyes, and though forced for the time along that of reaction, they would have known the direction in which they were travelling. Again and again victory has come out of defeat; again and again defeat has nerved men to greater effort.

But when defeat is represented as victory by the trusted leader, there follows the sublest and most paralysing form of confusion and doubt. Men no longer know who are the friends and who the enemies of the things they care for. When callous cruelty is called righteous, and cynical deception justice, men begin to lose their capacity to distinguish the one from the other, and to change sides without consciousness of their treason.

In the field of social relationship, the better management by men of their society, a sincere facing of the simple truths of life, right conclusions from facts that are of universal knowledge, are of immeasurably greater importance than erudition. Indeed we see that again and again learning obscures in this field the simpler truths. The Germany that had grown up before the War is a case in point. Vast learning, meticulous care over infinite detail, had become the mark of German scholarship. But all the learning of the professors did not prevent a gross misreading of what, to the rest of the world, seemed all but self-evident—simple truths which perhaps would have been clearer if the learning had been less, used as it was to buttress the lusts of domination and power.

The main errors of the Treaty (which, remember, was the work of the greatest diplomatic experts in Europe) reveal

something similar. If the punitive element—which is still applauded—defeats finally the aims alike of justice, our own security, appeasement, disarmament, and sets up moral forces that will render our New World even more ferociously cruel and hopeless than the Old, it will not be because we were ignorant of the fact that 'Germany'—or 'Austria' or 'Russia' —is not a person that can be held responsible and punished in this simple fashion. It did not require an expert knowledge of economics to realise that a ruined Germany could not pay vast indemnities. Yet sometimes very learned men were possessed by these fallacies. It is not learning that is needed to penetrate them. A wisdom founded simply on the sincere facing of self-evident facts would have saved European opinion from its most mischievous excesses. This ignorance of the learned may perhaps be related to another phenomenon; a great increase in our understanding of inert matter, unaccompanied by any corresponding increase in our understanding of human conduct. This latter understanding demands a temperamental self-control and detachment, which mere technical knowledge does not ask. Although in technical science we have made such advances as would cause the Athenians, say, to look on us as gods, we show no corresponding advance upon them, or upon the Hebrew prophets for that matter, in the understanding of conduct and its motives. And the spectacle of Germany—of the modern world, indeed—so efficient in the management of matter, so clumsy in the understanding of the essentials of human relationship, reminds us once more of the futility of mere technical knowledge, unless accompanied by a better moral understanding. For without the latter we are unable to use the improvement in technique (as Europe is unable to use it to-day) for indispensable human ends. Or worse still, technical knowledge, in the absence of wisdom and discipline, merely gives us more efficient weapons of collective suicide. Butler's fantasy of the machines which men have made acquiring a mind of their own, and then rounding upon

their masters and destroying them, has very nearly come true. If some new force, like the release of atomic energy, had been discovered during this war, and applied (as Mr Wells has imagined it being applied) to bombs that would go on exploding without cessation for a week or two, we know that passions ran so high that both sides would have used them, as both sides in the next war will use super-poison gas and disease germs. Not only the destruction, therefore, but the passion and the ruthlessness, the fears and hates, the universal pre-emption of wealth for 'defence' perpetually translating itself into preventive offence, would have grown. Man's society would assuredly have been destroyed by the instruments that he himself had made, and Butler's fantasy would have come true.

It is coming true to-day. What starves Europe is not lack of technical knowledge; there is more technical knowledge than when Europe could feed itself. If we could combine our forces to effective co-operation, the Malthusian dragon could be kept at bay. It is the group of ideas which underlie the process of Balkanisation that stand in the way of turning our combined forces against Nature instead of against one another.

We have gone wrong mainly in certain of the simpler and broader issues of human relationship, and this book has attempted to disentangle from the complex mass of facts in the international situation, those 'sovereign ideas' which constitute in crises the basic factors of public action and opinion. In so doing there may have been some over-simplification. That will not greatly matter, if the result is some re-examination and clarification of the predominant beliefs that have been analysed. 'Truth comes out of error more easily than out of confusion,' as Bacon warned us. It is easier to correct a working hypothesis of society, which is wrong in some detail, than to achieve wise conduct in society without any social principle. If social or political phenomena are for us first an unexplained tangle of forces, and we live morally from hand to mouth, by opinions which have no guiding principle, our emotions will be at the

mercy first of one isolated fact or incident, and then of another.

A certain parallel has more than once been suggested in these pages. European society is to-day threatened with disintegration as the result of ideas and emotions that have collected round Patriotism. A century or two since it was threatened by ideas and passions which gathered round religious dogma. By what process did we arrive at religious toleration as a social principle? That question has been suggested because to answer it may throw some light on our present problem of rendering Patriotism a social instead of an anti-social force.

If to-day, for the most part, in Europe and America one sect can live beside another in peace, where a century or two ago there would have been fierce hatreds, wars, massacres, and burnings, it is not because the modern population is more learned in theology (it is probably less so), but rather conversely, because theological theory gave place to lay judgment in the ordinary facts of life.

If we have a vast change in the general ideas of Europe in the religious sphere, in the attitude of men to dogma, in the importance which they attach to it, in their feeling about it; a change which for good or evil is a vast one in its consequences, a moral and intellectual revulsion which has swept away one great difficulty of human relationship and transformed society; it is because the laity have brought the discussion back to principles so broad and fundamental that the data became the facts of human life and experience—data with which the common man is as familiar as the scholar. Of the present-day millions for whom certain beliefs of the older theologians would be morally monstrous, how many have been influenced by elaborate study concerning the validity of this or that text? The texts simply do not weigh with them, though for centuries they were the only things that counted. What do weigh with them are profounder and simpler things—a sense of justice, compassion—things which would equally have led the man of the sixteenth century to question the texts and the premises of the Church,

if discussion had been free. It is because it was not free that the social instinct of the mass, the general capacity to order their relations so as to make it possible for them to live together, became distorted and vitiated. And the wars of religion resulted. To correct this vitiation, to abolish these disastrous hates and misconceptions, elaborate learning was not needed. Indeed, it was largely elaborate learning which had occasioned them. The judges who burned women alive for witchcraft, or inquisitors who sanctioned that punishment for heresy, had vast and terrible stores of learning. *What was needed was that these learned folk should question their premises in the light of facts of common knowledge.* It is by so doing that their errors are patent to the quite unlearned of our time. No layman was equipped to pass judgment on the historical reasons which might support the credibility of this or that miracle, or the intricate arguments which might justify this or that point of dogma. But the layman was as well equipped, indeed, he was better equipped than the schoolman, to question whether God would ever torture men everlastingly for the expression of honest belief; the observer of daily occurrences, to say nothing of the physicist, was as able as the theologian to question whether a readiness to believe without evidence is a virtue at all. Questions of the damnation of infants, eternal torment, were settled not by the men equipped with historical and ecclesiastical scholarship, but by the average man, going back to the broad truths, to first principles, asking very simple questions, the answer to which depended not upon the validity of texts, but upon correct reasoning concerning facts which are accessible to all; upon our general sense of life as a whole, and our more elementary institutions of justice and mercy; reasoning and intuitions which the learning of the expert often distorts.

Exactly the service which extricated us from the intellectual and moral confusion that resulted in such catastrophes in the field of religion, is needed in the field of politics. From certain learned folk—writers, poets, professors (German and other),

journalists, historians, and rulers— the public have taken a group of ideas concerning Patriotism, Nationalism, Imperialism, the nature of our obligation to the State, and so on, ideas which may be right or wrong, but which we are all agreed, will have to be very much changed if men are ever to live together in peace and freedom; just as certain notions concerning the institution of private property will have to be changed if the mass of men are to live in plenty.

It is a commonplace of militarist argument that so long as men feel as they do about their Fatherland, about patriotism and nationalism, internationalism will be an impossibility. If that is true—and I think it is—peace and freedom and welfare will wait until those large issues have been raised in men's minds with sufficient vividness to bring about a change of idea and so a change of feeling with reference to them.

It is unlikely, to say the least, that the mass of Englishmen or Frenchmen will ever be in possession of detailed knowledge sufficient to equip them to pass judgment on the various rival solutions of the complex problems that face us, say, in the Balkans. And yet it was immediately out of a problem of Balkan politics that the War arose, and future wars may well arise out of those same problems if they are settled as badly in the future as in the past.

The situation would indeed be hopeless if the nature of human relationship depended upon the possession by the people as a whole of expert knowledge in complex questions of that kind. But happily the Sarajevo murders would never have developed into a war involving twenty nations but for the fact that there had been cultivated in Europe suspicions, hatreds, insane passions, and cupidities, due largely to false conceptions(though in part also themselves prompting the false conceptions) of a few simple facts in political relationship; conceptions concerning the necessary rivalry of nations, the idea that what one nation gains another loses, that States are doomed by a fate over which they have no control to struggle together for the space and

opportunities of a limited world. But for the atmosphere that these ideas create (as false theological notions once created a similar atmosphere between rival religious groups) most of these at present difficult and insoluble problems of nationality and frontiers and government, would have solved themselves.

The ideas which feed and inflame these passions of rivalry, hostility, fear, hate, will be modified, if at all, by raising in the mind of the European some such simple elementary questions as were raised when he began to modify his feeling about the man of rival religious belief. The Political Reformation in Europe will come by questioning, for instance, the whole philosophy of patriotism, the morality or the validity, in terms of human well-being, of a principle like that of 'my country, right or wrong'; [1] by questioning whether a people really benefit by enlarging the frontiers of their State; whether 'greatness' in a nation particularly matters; whether the man of the small State is not in all the great human values the equal of the man of the great Empire; whether the real problems of life are greatly affected by the colour of the flag; whether we have not loyalties to other things as well as to our State; whether we do not in our demand for national sovereignty ignore international obligation without which the nations can have neither security nor freedom; whether we should not refuse to kill or horribly mutilate a man merely because we differ from him in politics. And with those, if the emergence from chattel-slavery is to be complemented by the emergence from wage slavery, must be put similarly fundamental questions touching problems like that of private property and the relation of social freedom thereto; we must ask why, if it is rightly demanded of the citizen that his life shall be forfeit to the safety of the State, his surplus money, property, shall not be forfeit to its welfare.

[1] We realise without difficulty that no society could be formed by individuals each of whom had been taught to base his conduct on adages such as these: 'Myself alone'; 'myself before anybody else'; 'my ego is sacred'; 'myself over all'; 'myself right or wrong.' Yet those are the slogans of Patriotism the world over and are regarded as noble and inspiring, shouted with a moral and approving thrill.

To very many, these questions will seem a kind of blasphemy, and they will regard those who utter them as the subjects of a loathsome perversion. In just that way the orthodox of old regarded the heretic and his blasphemies. And yet the solution of the difficulties of our time, this problem of learning to live together without mutual homicide and military slavery, depends upon those blasphemies being uttered. Because it is only in some such way that the premises of the differences which divide us, the realities which underlie them, will receive attention. It is not that the implied answer is necessarily the truth—I am not concerned now for a moment to urge that it is—but that until the problem is pushed back in our minds to these great yet simple issues, the will, temper, general ideas of Europe on this subject will remain unchanged. And if *they* remain unchanged so will its conduct and condition.

The tradition of nationalism and patriotism, around which have gathered our chief political loyalties and instincts, has become in the actual conditions of the world an anti-social and disruptive force. Although we realize perhaps that a society of nations of some kind there must be, each unit proclaims proudly its anti-social slogan of sacred egoisms and defiant immoralism; its espousal of country as against right.[1]

The danger—and the difficulty—resides largely in the fact that the instincts of gregariousness and group solidarity, which prompt the attitude of 'my country right or wrong,' are not in themselves evil: both gregariousness and pugnacity are indispensable to society. Nationality is a very precious manifestation of the instincts by which alone men can become socially

[1] However mischievous some of the manifestations of Nationalism may prove, the worst possible method of dealing with it is by the forcible repression of any of its claims which can be granted with due regard to the general interest. To give Nationalism full play, as far as possible, is the best means of attenuating its worst features and preventing its worst developments. This, after all, is the line of conduct which we adopt to certain religious beliefs which we may regard as dangerous superstitions. Although the belief may have dangers, the social dangers involved in forcible repression would be greater still.

conscious and act in some corporate capacity. The identification of 'self' with society, which patriotism accomplishes within certain limits, the sacrifice of self for the community which it inspires—even though only when fighting other patriotisms—are moral achievements of infinite hope.

The Catharian heresy that Jehovah of the Old Testament is in reality Satan masquerading as God has this pregnant suggestion: if the Father of Evil ever does destroy us, we may be sure that he will come, not proclaiming himself evil, but proclaiming himself good, the very Voice of God. And that is the danger with patriotism and the instincts that gather round it. If the instincts of nationalism were simply evil, they would constitute no real danger. It is the good in them that has made them the instrument of the immeasurable devastation which they accomplish.

That Patriotism does indeed transcend all morality, all religious sanctions as we have heretofore known them, can be put to a very simple test. Let an Englishman, recalling, if he can, his temper during the War, ask himself this question: Is there anything, anything whatsoever, that he would have refused to do, if the refusal had meant the triumph of Germany and the defeat of England? In his heart he knows that he would have justified any act if the safety of his country had hung upon it.

Other patriotisms have like justifications. Yet would defeat, submission, even to Germany, involve worse acts than those we have felt compelled to commit during the War and since—in the work of making our power secure? Did the German ask of the Alsatian or the Pole worse than we have been compelled to ask of our own soldiers in Russia, India, or Ireland?

The old struggle for power goes on. For the purpose of that struggle we are prepared to transform our society in any way that it may demand. For the purposes of the war for power we will accept anything that the strength of the enemy imposes: we will be socialist, autocratic, democratic, or communist; we will conscribe the bodies, souls, wealth of our people; we will

proscribe, as we do, the Christian doctrine, and all mercy and humanity; we will organise falsehood and deceit, and call it statecraft and strategy; lie for the purpose of inflaming hate, and rejoice at the effectiveness of our propaganda; we will torture helpless millions by pestilence and famine—as we have done—and look on unmoved; our priests, in the name of Christ, will reprove misplaced pity, and call for the further punishment of the wicked, still greater efforts in the Fight for Right. We shall not care what transformations take place in our society or our natures; or what happens to the human spirit. Obediently, at the behest of the enemy—because, that is, his power demands that conduct of us—shall we do all those things, or anything, save only one: we will not negotiate or make a contract with him. *That* would limit our 'independence'; by which we mean that his submission to our mastery would be less complete.

We can do acts of infinite cruelty; disregard all accepted morality; but we cannot allow the enemy to escape the admission of defeat.

If we are to correct the evils of the older tradition, and build up one which will restore to men the art of living together, we must honestly face the fact that the older tradition has failed. So long as the old loyalties and patriotisms, tempting us with power and dominion, calling to the deep hunger excited by those things, and using the banners of righteousness and justice, seem to offer security, and a society which, if not ideal, is at least workable, we certainly shall not pay the price which all profound change of habit demands. We have seen that as a fact of his history man only abandons power and force over others when it fails. At present, almost everywhere, we refuse to face the failure of the old forms of political power. We don't believe that we need the co-operation of the foreigner, or we believe that we can coerce him.

Little attention has been given here to the machinery of internationalism—League of Nations, Courts of Arbitration, Disarmament. This is not because machinery is unimportant.

But if we possessed the Will, if we were ready each to pay his contribution in some sacrifice of his independence, of his opportunity of domination, the difficulties of machinery would largely disappear. The story of America's essay in internationalism has warned us of the real difficulty. Courts of Arbitration, Leagues of Nations, were devices to which American opinion readily enough agreed; too readily. For the event showed that the old conceptions were not changed. They had only been disregarded. No machinery of internationalism can work so long as the impulses and prepossessions of irresponsible nationalism retain their power. The test we must apply to our sincerity is our answer to the question:—What price, in terms of national independence, are we prepared to pay for a world law? What, in fact, *is* the price that is asked of us? To this last question, the pages that precede, and to some extent those that follow, have attempted to supply an answer. We should gain many times in freedom and independence the contribution in those things that we made.

Perhaps we may be driven by hunger—the actual need of our children for bread—to forsake a method which cannot give them bread or freedom, in favour of one that can. But, for the failure of power to act as a deterrent upon our desire for it, we must perceive the failure. Our angers and hatreds obscure that failure, or render us indifferent to it. Hunger does not necessarily help the understanding; it may bemuse it by passion and resentment. We may in our passion wreck civilisation as a passionate man in his anger will injure those he loves. Yet, well fed, we may refuse to concern ourselves with problems of the morrow. The mechanical motive will no longer suffice. In the simpler, more animal forms of society, the instinct of each moment, with no thought of ultimate consequence, may be enough. But the Society which man has built up can only go forward or be preserved as it began: by virtue of something which is more than instinct. On man is cast the obligation to be intelligent; the responsibility of will; the burden of thought.

If some of us have felt that, beyond all other evils which translate themselves into public policy, those with which these pages deal constitute the greatest, it is not because war means the loss of life, the killing of men. Many of our noblest activities do that. There are so many of us that it is no great disaster that a few should die. It is not because war means suffering. Suffering endured for a conscious and clearly conceived human purpose is redeemed by hope of real achievement; it may be a glad sacrifice for some worthy end. But if we have floundered hopelessly into a bog because we have forgotten our end and purpose in the heat of futile passion, the consolation which we may gather from the willingness with which men die in the bog should not stand in the way of our determination to rediscover our destination and create afresh our purpose. These pages have been concerned very little with the loss of life, the suffering of the last seven years. What they have dealt with mainly is the fact that the War has left us a less workable society, has been marked by an increase in the forces of chaos and disintegration. That is the ultimate indictment of this War as of all wars: the attitude towards life, the ideas and motive forces out of which it grows, and which it fosters, makes men less able to live together, their society less workable, and must end by making free society impossible. War not only arises out of the failure of human wisdom, from the defect of that intelligence by which alone we can successfully fight the forces of nature; it perpetuates that failure and worsens it. For only by a passion which keeps thought at bay can the 'morale' of war be maintained. The very justification which we advance for our war-time censorships and propaganda, our suspension of free speech and discussion, is that if we gave full value to the enemy's case, saw him as he really is, blundering, foolish, largely helpless like ourselves; saw the defects of our own and our Allies' policy, saw what our own acts in war really involved and how nearly they resembled those which aroused our anger when done by the enemy, if we saw all this

and kept our heads, we should abandon war. A thousand times it has been explained that in an impartial mood we cannot carry on war; that unless the people come to feel that all the right is on our side and all the wrong on the enemy's, morale will fail. The most righteous war can only be kept going by falsehood. The end of that falsehood is that our mind collapses. And although the mind, thought, judgment, are not all-sufficient for man's salvation, it is impossible without them. Behind all other explanations of Europe's creeping paralysis is the blindness of the millions, their inability to see the effects of their demands and policy, to see where they are going.

Only a keener feeling for truth will enable them to see. About indifferent things—about the dead matter that we handle in our science—we can be honest, impartial, true. That is why we succeed in dealing with matter. But about the things we care for—which are ourselves—our desires and lusts, our patriotisms and hates, we find a harder test of thinking straight and truly. Yet there is the greater need; only by that rectitude shall we be saved. There is no refuge but in truth.

ADDENDUM

THE ARGUMENT OF *THE GREAT ILLUSION*

CHAPTER I

THE 'IMPOSSIBILITY OF WAR' MYTH

It will illustrate certain difficulties which have marked—and mark—the presentation of the argument of this book, if the reader will consider for a few minutes the justice of certain charges which have been brought against *The Great Illusion*. Perhaps the commonest is that it argued that 'war had become impossible.' The truth of that charge at least can very easily be tested. The first page of that book, the preface, referring to the thesis it proposed to set out, has these words: 'the argument is *not* that war is impossible, but that it is futile.' The next page but one describes what the author believes to be the main forces at work in international politics: a fierce struggle for preponderant power 'based on the universal assumption that a nation, in order to find outlets for expanding population and increasing industry, or simply to ensure the best conditions possible for its people, is necessarily pushed to territorial expansion and the exercise of political force against others . . . that nations being competing units, advantage, in the last resort, goes to the possessor of preponderant military force, the weaker going to the wall, as in the other forms of the struggle for life.' A whole chapter is devoted to the evidence which goes to show that this aggressive and warlike philosophy was indeed the great actuating force in European politics. The first two paragraphs of the first chapter forecast the likelihood of an Anglo-German explosion; that chapter goes on to declare that the pacifist effort then current was

evidently making no headway at all against the tendencies towards rivalry and conflict. In the third chapter the ideas underlying those tendencies are described as 'so profoundly mischievous,' and so 'desperately dangerous,' as to threaten civilisation itself. A chapter is devoted to showing that the fallacy and folly of those all but universal ideas was no guarantee at all that the nations would not act upon them. (Particularly is the author insistent on the fact that the futility of war will never in itself suffice to stop war. The folly of a given course of action will only be a deterrent to the degree to which men realise its folly. That was why the book was written.) A warning is uttered against any reliance upon the Hague Conferences, which, it is explained at length, are likely to be quite ineffective against the momentum of the motives of aggression. A warning is uttered towards the close of the book against any reduction of British armaments, accompanied, however, by the warning that mere increase of armaments unaccompanied by change of policy, a Political Reformation in the direction of internationalism, will provoke the very catastrophe it is their object to avoid; only by that change of policy could we take a real step towards peace 'instead of *a step towards war, to which the mere piling up of armaments, unchecked by any other factor, must in the end inevitably lead.*'[1]

The last paragraph of the book asks the reader which of two courses we are to follow: a determined effort towards placing European policy on a new basis, or a drift along the current of old instincts and ideas, a course which would condemn us to the waste of mountains of treasure and the spilling of oceans of blood.

Yet, it is probably true to say that, of the casual newspaper references (as distinct from reviews) made during the last ten years to the book just described, four out of five are to the effect that its author said 'war was impossible because it did not pay.'

[1] *The Great Illusion*, p. 326

The following are some passages referred to in the above summary:—

'Not the facts, but men's opinions about the facts is what matters. This is because men's conduct is determined, not necessarily by the right conclusion from facts, but the conclusion they believe to be right. . . . As long as Europe is dominated by the old beliefs, those beliefs will have virtually the same effect in politics as though they were intrinsically sound.'—(p. 327.)

'It is evident that so long as the misconception we are dealing with is all but universal in Europe, so long as the nations believe that in some way the military and political subjugation of others will bring with it a tangible material advantage to the conqueror, we all do, in fact, stand in danger from such aggression. Not his interest, but what he deems to be his interest, will furnish the real motive of our prospective enemy's action. And as the illusion with which we are dealing does, indeed, dominate all those minds most active in European politics, we must, while this remains the case, regard an aggression, even such as that which Mr Harrison foresees, as within the bounds of practical politics. . . . On this ground alone I deem that we or any other nation are justified in taking means of self-defence to prevent such aggression. This is not, therefore, a plea for disarmament irrespective of the action of other nations. So long as current political philosophy in Europe remains what it is, I would not urge the reduction of our war budget by a single sovereign.'—(p. 329.)

'The need for defence arises from the existence of a motive for attack. . . . That motive is, consequently, part of the problem of defence. . . . Since as between the European peoples we are dealing with in this matter, one party is as able in the long run to pile up armaments as the other, we cannot get nearer to solution by armaments alone; we must get at the original provoking cause—the motive making for aggression.

. . . If that motive results from a true judgment of the facts; if the determining factor in a nation's well-being and progress is really its power to obtain by force advantage over others, the present situation of armament rivalry tempered by war is a natural and inevitable one. . . . If, however, the view is a false one, our progress towards solution will be marked by the extent to which the error becomes generally recognised in European public opinion.'—(p. 337.)

'In this matter it seems fatally easy to secure either one of two kinds of action: that of the "practical man" who limits his energies to securing a policy which will perfect the machinery of war and disregard anything else; or that of the Pacifist, who, persuaded of the brutality or immorality of war, is apt to deprecate effort directed at self-defence. What is needed is the type of activity which will include both halves of the problem: provision for education, for a Political Reformation in this matter, *as well as* such means of defence as will meantime counterbalance the existing impulse to aggression. To concentrate on either half to the exclusion of the other half is to render the whole problem insoluble.'—(p. 330.)

'Never has the contest of armament been so keen as when Europe began to indulge in Peace Conferences. Speaking roughly and generally, the era of great armament expansion dates from the first Hague Conference. The reader who has appreciated the emphasis laid in the preceding pages on working through the reform of ideas will not feel much astonishment at the failure of efforts such as these. The Hague Conferences represented an attempt, not to work through the reform of ideas, but to modify by mechanical means the political machinery of Europe, without reference to the ideas which had brought it into existence.

'Arbitration treaties, Hague Conferences, International Federation, involve a new conception of relationship between nations. But the ideals—political, economical, and social—on which the old conceptions are based, our terminology, our

political literature, our old habits of thought, diplomatic inertia, which all combine to perpetuate the old notions, have been left serenely undisturbed. And surprise is expressed that such schemes do not succeed.'—(p. 350.)

Very soon after the appearance of the book, I find I am shouting myself hoarse in the Press against this monstrous 'impossibility of war' foolishness. An article in the *Daily Mail* of September 15th, 1911, begins thus:—

'. . . One learns, with some surprise, that the very simple facts to which I have now for some years been trying to draw the attention they deserve, teach that:—

1. War is now impossible.
2. War would ruin both the victor and the vanquished.
3. War would leave the victor worse off than the vanquished.

'May I say with every possible emphasis that nothing I have ever written justifies any one of these conclusions.

'I have always, on the contrary, urged that:—

(1) War is, unhappily, quite possible, and, in the prevailing condition of ignorance concerning certain elementary politico-economic facts, even likely.

(2) There is nothing to justify the conclusion that war would "ruin" both victor and vanquished. Indeed, I do not quite know what the "ruin" of a nation means.

(3) While in the past the vanquished has often profited more by defeat than he could possibly have done by victory, it is no necessary result, and we are safest in assuming that the vanquished will suffer most.'

Nearly two years later I find myself still engaged in the same task. Here is a letter to the *Saturday Review* (March 8th, 1913):—

'You are good enough to say that I am "one of the very few advocates of peace at any price who is not altogether an ass." And yet you also state that I have been on a mission "to persuade the German people that war in the twentieth century is impossible." If I had ever tried to teach anybody such sorry rubbish I should be altogether an unmitigated ass. I have never, of course, nor so far as I am aware, has any one ever said that war was impossible. Personally, not only do I regard war as possible, but extremely likely. What I have been preaching in Germany is that it is impossible for Germany to benefit by war, especially a war against us; and that, of course, is quite a different matter.'

It is true that if the argument of the book as a whole pointed to the conclusion that war was 'impossible,' it would be beside the point to quote passages repudiating that conclusion. They might merely prove the inconsequence of the author's thought. But the book, and the whole effort of which it was a part, would have had no *raison d'être* if the author had believed war unlikely or impossible. It was a systematic attack on certain political ideas which the author declared were dominant in international politics. If he had supposed those powerful ideas were making *not* for war, but for peace, why as a pacifist should he be at such pains to change them? And if he thought those war-provoking ideas which he attacked were not likely to be put into effect, why, in that case either, should he bother at all? Why, for that matter, should a man who thought war impossible engage in not too popular propaganda against war —against something which could not occur?

A moment's real reflection on the part of those responsible for this description of *The Great Illusion,* should have convinced them that it could not be a true one.

I have taken the trouble to go through some of the more serious criticisms of the book to see whether this extraordinary confusion was created in the mind of those who actually read

the book instead of reading about it. So far as I know, not a single serious critic has come to a conclusion that agrees with the 'popular' verdict. Several going to the book after the War, seem to express surprise at the absence of any such conclusion. Professor Lindsay writes:—

'Let us begin by disposing of one obvious criticism of the doctrines of *The Great Illusion* which the out-break of war has suggested. Mr Angell never contended that war was impossible, though he did contend that it must always be futile. He insisted that the futility of war would not make war impossible or armament unnecessary until all nations recognised its futility. So long as men held that nations could advance their interests by war, so long war would last. His moral was that we should fight militarism, whether in Germany or in our own country, as one ought to fight an idea with better ideas. He further pointed out that though it is pleasanter to attack the wrong ideals held by foreigners, it is more effective to attack the wrong ideals held in our own country. . . . The pacifist hope was that the outbreak of a European war, which was recognised as quite possible, might be delayed until, with the progress of pacifist doctrine, war became impossible. That hope has been tragically frustrated, but if the doctrines of pacifism are convincing and irrefutable, it was not in itself a vain hope. Time was the only thing it asked of fortune, and time was denied it.'

Another post-war critic—on the other side of the Atlantic —writes:—

'Mr. Angell has received too much solace from the unwisdom of his critics. Those who have denounced him most vehemently are those who patently have not read his books. For example, he cannot properly be classed, as frequently asserted in recent months, as one of those Utopian pacifists who went about

proclaiming war impossible. A number of passages in *The Great Illusion* show him fully alive to the danger of the present collapse; indeed, from the narrower view of politics his book was one of the several fruitless attempts to check that growing estrangement between England and Germany whose sinister menace far-sighted men discerned. Even less justifiable are the flippant sneers which discard his argument as mercenary or sordid. Mr Angell has never taken an "account book" or "breeches pocket" view of war. He inveighs against what he terms its political and moral futilities as earnestly as against its economic futility.'

It may be said that there must be some cause for so persistent a misrepresentation. There is. Its cause is that obstinate and deep-seated fatalism which is so large a part of the prevailing attitude to war and against which the book under consideration was a protest. Take it as an axiom that war comes upon us as an outside force, like the rain or the earthquake, and not as something that we can influence, and a man who 'does not believe in war,' must be a person who believes that war is not coming;[1] that men are naturally peaceable. To be a Pacifist because one believes that the danger of war is very great indeed, or because one believes men to be naturally extremely prone to war, is a position incomprehensible until we have rid our minds of the fatalism which regards war as an 'inevitable' result of uncontrollable forces.

What is a writer to do, however, in the face of persistent misrepresentation such as this? If he were a manufacturer of soap and some one said his soap was underweight, or he were a grocer and some one said his sugar was half sand, he could of course obtain enormous damages. But a mere writer, having given some years of his life to the study of the most important problem of his time, is quite helpless when a tired

[1] 'The Pacifists lie when they tell us that the danger of war is over.' General Leonard Wood.

headline writer, or a journalist indulging his resentment, or what he thinks is likely to be the resentment of his readers, describes a book as proclaiming one thing when as a matter of simple fact it proclaims the exact contrary.

So much for myth or misrepresentation No. 1. We come to a second, namely, that *The Great Illusion* is an appeal to avarice; that it urges men not to defend their country 'because to do so does not pay;' that it would have us place 'pocket before patriotism,' a view reflected in Benjamin Kidd's last book, pages of which are devoted to the condemnation of the 'degeneracy and futility' of resting the cause of peace on no higher ground than that it is 'a great illusion to believe that a national policy founded on war can be a profitable policy for any people in the long run.' [1] He quotes approvingly Sir William Robertson Nicoll for denouncing those who condemn war because 'it would postpone the blessed hour of tranquil money getting.' [2] As a means of obscuring truths which it is important to realise, of creating by misrepresentation a moral repulsion to a thesis, and thus depriving it of consideration, this second line of attack is even more important than the first.

To say of a book that it prophesied 'the impossibility of war,' is to imply that it is mere silly rubbish, and its author a fool. Sir William Robertson Nicoll's phrase would of course imply that its doctrine was morally contemptible.

The reader must judge, after considering dispassionately what follows, whether this second description is any truer than the first.

[1] *The Science of Power*, p. 14. [2] Ibid, p. 144.

CHAPTER II

'ECONOMIC' AND 'MORAL' MOTIVES IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Great Illusion dealt— among other factors of international conflict—with the means by which the population of the world is driven to support itself; and studied the effect of those efforts to find sustenance upon the relations of States. It therefore dealt with economics.

On the strength of this, certain critics (like some of those quoted in the last chapter) who cannot possibly have read the book thoroughly, seem to have argued: If this book about war deals with 'economics,' it must deal with money and profits. To bring money and profits into a discussion of war is to imply that men fight for money, and won't fight if they don't get money from it; that war does not 'pay.' This is wicked and horrible. Let us denounce the writer for a shallow Hedonist and money-grubber. . . .

As a matter of simple fact, as we shall see presently, the book was largely an attempt to show that the economic argument usually adduced for a particularly ruthless form of national selfishness was not a sound argument; that the commonly invoked justification for a selfish immoralism in Foreign Policy was a fallacy, an illusion. Yet the critics somehow managed to turn what was in fact an argument against national egoism into an argument for selfishness.

What was the political belief and the attitude towards life which *The Great Illusion* challenged? And what was the counter principle which it advocated as a substitute therefore?

It challenged the theory that the vital interests of nations are conflicting, and that war is part of the inevitable struggle for life among them; the view that, in order to feed itself, a nation with an expanding population must conquer territory and so deprive others of the means of subsistence; the view that war is the 'struggle for bread.'[1] In other words, it challenged the economic excuse or justification for the 'sacred egoism' which is so largely the basis of the nationalist political philosophy, an excuse, which, as we shall see, the nationalist invokes if not to deny the moral law in the international field, at least to put the morality governing the relations of States on a very different plane from that which governs the relations of individuals. As against this doctrine *The Great Illusion* advanced the proposition, among others, that the economic or biological assumption on which it is based is false; that the policy of political power which results from this assumption is economically unworkable, its benefits an illusion; that the amount of sustenance provided by the earth is not a fixed quantity so that what one nation can seize another loses, but is an expanding quantity, its amount depending mainly upon the efficiency with which men co-operate in their exploitation of Nature. As already pointed out, a hundred thousand Red Indians starved in a country where a hundred million modern Americans have abundance. The need for co-operation, and the faith on which alone it can be maintained, being indispensable to our common welfare, the violation of the social compact, international obligation, will be visited with penalties just as surely as are violations of the moral law in relations between individuals. The economic factor is not the sole or the largest element in human relations, but it is the one which occupies the largest place in public law and policy. (Of two contestants, each can retain his religion or literary preferences without depriving the other of like possessions; they cannot both retain the same piece of material property.) The economic

[1] See quotations, Part I, Chapters I and III.

problem is vital in the sense of dealing with the means by which we maintain life; and it is invoked as justification for the political immoralism of States. Until the confusions concerning it are cleared up, it will serve little purpose to analyse the other elements of conflict.

What justifies the assumption that the predatory egotism, sacred or profane, here implied, was an indispensable part of the pre-war political philosophy, explaining the great part of policy in the international field?[1]

First the facts: the whole history of international conflict in the decade or two which preceded the War; and the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. If you would find out the nature of a people's (or a statesman's) political morality, note their conduct when they have complete power to carry their desires into effect. The terms of peace, and the relations of the Allies with Russia, show a deliberate and avowed pre-occupation with sources of oil, iron, coal; with indemnities, investments, old debts; with Colonies, markets; the elimination of commercial rivals—with all these things to a degree very much greater and in a fashion much more direct than was assumed in *The Great Illusion.*

But the tendency had been evident in the conflicts which preceded the War. These conflicts, in so far as the Great Powers were concerned, had been in practically every case over territory, or roads to territory; over Madagascar, Egypt, Morocco, Korea, Mongolia; 'warm water' ports, the division

[1] The validity of this assumption still holds even though we take the view that the defence of war as an inevitable struggle for bread is merely a rationalisation (using that word in the technical sense of the psychologists) of impulse or instinct, merely, that is, an attempt to find a 'reason' for conduct the real explanation of which is the subconscious promptings of pugnacities or hostilities, the craving of our nature for certain kinds of action. If we could not justify our behaviour in terms of self-preservation, it would stand so plainly condemned ethically and socially that discipline of instinct—as in the case of sex instinct—would obviously be called for and enforced. In either case, the road to better behaviour is by a clearer revelation of the social mischief of the predominant policy.

of Africa, the partitioning of China, loans thereto and concessions therein; the Persian Gulf, the Bagdad Railway, the Panama Canal. Where the principle of nationality was denied by any Great Power it was generally because to recognise it might block access to the sea or raw materials, throw a barrier across the road to undeveloped territory.

There was no denial of this by those who treated of public affairs. Mr Lloyd George declared that England would be quite ready to go to war rather than have the Morocco question settled without reference to her. Famous writers like Mahan did not balk at conclusions like this:—

'It is the great amount of unexploited raw material in territories politically backward, and now imperfectly possessed by the nominal owners, which at the present moment constitutes the temptation and the impulse to war of European States.'[1]

Nor to justify them thus:—

'More and more Germany needs the assured importation of raw materials, and, where possible, control of regions productive of such materials. More and more she requires assured markets, and security as to the importation of food, since less and less comparatively is produced within her own borders for her rapidly increasing population. This all means security at sea. . . . Yet the supremacy of Great Britain in European seas means a perpetually latent control of German commerce. . . . The world has long been accustomed to the idea of a predominant naval power, coupling it accurately with the name of Great Britain: and it has been noted that such power, when achieved, is commonly found associated with commercial and industrial pre-eminence, the struggle for which is now in progress between Great Britain and Germany.

[1] Rear-Admiral A. T. Mahan: *Force in International Relations.*

Such pre-eminence forces a nation to seek markets, and, where possible, to control them to its own advantage by preponderant force, the ultimate expression of which is possession. . . . From this flow two results: the attempt to possess, and the organisation of force by which to maintain possession already achieved. . . . This statement is simply a specific formulation of the general necessity stated; itself an inevitable link in a chain of logical sequence: industry, markets, control, navy, bases. . . .[1]

Mr Spenser Wilkinson, of a corresponding English school, is just as definite:—

'The effect of growth is an expansion and an increase of power. It necessarily affects the environment of the growing organisms; it interferes with the *status quo*. Existing rights and interests are disturbed by the fact of growth, which is itself a change. The growing community finds itself hedged in by previously existing and surviving conditions, and fettered by prescriptive rights. There is, therefore, an exertion of force to overcome resistance. No process of law or of arbitration can deal with this phenomenon, because any tribunal administering a system of right or law must base its decision upon the tradition of the past which has become unsuited to the new conditions that have arisen. The growing State is necessarily expansive or aggressive.'[2]

Even more decisive as a definite philosophy are the propositions of Mr Petre, who, writing on 'The Mandate of Humanity,' says:—

'The conscience of a State cannot, therefore, be as delicate, as disinterested, as altruistic, as that of the noblest individuals. The State exists primarily for its own people and only

[1] *The Interest of America in International Conditions*, by Rear-Admiral A. T. Mahan, pp. 47-87.
[2] *Government and the War*, p. 62.

secondarily for the rest of the world. Hence, given a dispute in which it feels its rights and welfare to be at stake, it may, however erroneously, set aside its moral obligations to international society in favour of its obligations to the people for whom it exists.

'But no righteous conscience, it may be said, could give its verdict against a solemn pledge taken and reciprocated; no righteous conscience could, in a society of nations, declare against the ends of that society. Indeed I think it could, and sometimes would, if its sense of justice were outraged, if its duty to those who were bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh came into conflict with its duty to those who were not directly belonging to it. . . .

'The mechanism of a State exists mainly for its own preservation, and cannot be turned against this, its legitimate end. The conscience of a State will not traverse this main condition, and to weaken its conscience is to weaken its life. . . .

'The strong will not give way to the weak; the one who thinks himself in the right will not yield to those whom he believes to be in the wrong; the living generations will not be restrained by the promises to a dead one; nature will not be controlled by conventions.' [1]

It is the last note that gives the key to popular feeling about the scramble for territory. In *The Great Illusion* whole pages of popular writing are quoted to show that the conception of the struggle as in truth the struggle for survival had firmly planted itself in the popular consciousness. One of the critics who is so severe upon the present writer for trying to undermine the economic foundation of that popular creed, Benjamin Kidd, himself testifies to the depth and sweep of this pseudo-Darwinism (he seems to think indeed that it is true Darwinism, which it is not, as Darwin himself pointed out). He declares that 'there is no precedent in the history of the

[1] *State Morality and a League of Nations,* pp 83-85.

human mind to compare with the saturnalia of the Western intellect' which followed the popularisation of what he regards as Darwin's case and I would regard as a distortion of it. Kidd says it 'touched the profoundest depth of the psychology of the West.' 'Everywhere throughout civilisation an almost inconceivable influence was given to the doctrine of the law of biological necessity in books of statecraft and warcraft, of expanding military empires.' 'Struggle for life,' 'a biological necessity,' 'survival of the fit,' had passed into popular use and had come to buttress popular feeling about the inevitability of war and its ultimate justification and the uselessness of organising the natives save on a basis of conflict.

We are now in a position to see the respective moral positions of the two protagonists.

The advocate of Political Theory No. 1, which an overwhelming preponderance of evidence shows to be the prevailing theory, says:—You Pacifists are asking us to commit national suicide; to sacrifice future generations to your political ideals. Now, as voters or statesmen we are trustees, we act for others. Sacrifice, suicide even, on behalf of an ideal, may be justified when we are sacrificing ourselves. But we cannot sacrifice others, our wards. Our first duty is to our own nation, our own children; to their national security and future welfare. It is regrettable if, by the conquests, wars, blockades, rendered necessary by those objects other people starve, and lose their national freedom and see their children die; but that is the hard necessity of life in a hard world.

Advocate of Political Theory No. 2 says:—I deny that the excuse of justification which you give for your cruelty to others is a valid excuse or justification. Pacifism does not ask you to sacrifice your people, to betray the interest of your wards. You will serve their interests best by the policy we advocate. Your children will not be more assured of their sustenance by these conquests that attempt to render the feeding of foreign children more difficult; yours will be less secure.

By co-operating with those others instead of using your energies against them, the resultant wealth. . . .

Advocate No. 1:—Wealth! Interest! You introduce your wretched economic calculations of interest into a question of Patriotism. You have the soul of a bagman concerned only to restore 'the blessed hour of tranquil money-getting,' and Sir William Robertson Nicoll shall denounce you in the *British Weekly!*

And the discussion usually ends with this moral flourish and gestures of melodramatic indignation.

But are they honest gestures? Here are the upholders of a certain position who say:—'In certain circumstances as when you are in a position of trustee, the only moral course, the only right course, is to be guided by the interests of your ward. Your duty then demands a calculation of advantage. You may not be generous at your ward's expense. This is the justification of the "sacred egoism" of the poet.'

If in that case a critic says: 'Very well. Let us consider what will be the best interests of your ward,' is it really open to the first party to explain in a paroxysm of moral indignation: 'You are making a shameful and disgraceful appeal to selfishness and avarice?'

This is not an attempt to answer one set of critics by quoting another set. The self-same people take those two attitudes. I have quoted above a passage of Admiral Mahan's in which he declares that nations can never be expected to act from any other motive than that of interest (a generalisation, by the way, from which I should most emphatically dissent). He goes on to declare that Governments 'must put first the rival interests of their own wards . . . their own people,' and are thus pushed to the acquisition of markets by means of military predominance.

Very well. *The Great Illusion* argued some of Admiral Mahan's propositions in terms of interest and advantage. And then, when he desired to demolish that argument, he did not

hesitate in a long article in the *North American Review* to write as follows:—

'The purpose of armaments, in the minds of those maintaining them, is not primarily an economical advantage, in the sense of depriving a neighbour State of its own, or fear of such consequences to itself through the deliberate aggression of a rival having that particular end in view. . . . The fundamental proposition of the book is a mistake. Nations are under no illusion as to the unprofitableness of war in itself. . . . The entire conception of the work is itself an illusion, based upon a profound misreading of human action. To regard the world as governed by self-interest only is to live in a non-existent world, an ideal world, a world possessed by an idea much less worthy than those which mankind, to do it bare justice, persistently entertains.' [1]

Admiral Mahan was a writer of very great and deserved reputation, in the very first rank of those dealing with the relations of power to national politics, certainly incapable of any conscious dishonesty of opinion. Yet, as we have seen, his opinion on the most important fact of all about war—its ultimate purpose, and the reasons which justify it or provoke it—swings violently in absolute self-contradiction. And the flat contradiction here revealed shows—and this surely is the moral of such an incident—that he could never have put to himself detachedly, coldly, impartially the question: 'What do I really believe about the motives of nations in War? To what do the facts as a whole really point?' Had he done so, it might have been revealed to him that what really determined his opinion about the causes of war was a desire to justify the great profession of arms, to one side of which he had devoted his life and given years of earnest labour and study; to defend from some imputation of futility one of the

[1] *North American Review,* March 1912.

most ancient of man's activities that calls for some at least of the sublimest of human qualities. If a widened idealism clearly discredited that ancient institution, he was prepared to show that an ineradicable conflict of national interests rendered it inevitable. If it was shown that war was irrelevant to those conflicts, or ineffective as a means of protecting the interests concerned, he was prepared to show that the motives pushing to war were not those of interest at all.

It may be said that none the less the thesis under discussion substitutes one selfish argument for another; tries by appealing to self-interest (the self-interest of a group or nation) to turn selfishness from a destructive result to a more social result. Its basis is self. Even that is not really true. For, first, that argument ignores the question of trusteeship; and, secondly, it involves a confusion between the motive of a given policy and the criterion by which its goodness or badness shall be tested.

How is one to deal with the claim of the 'mystic nationalist' (he exists abundantly even outside the Balkans) that the subjugation of some neighbouring nationalism is demanded by honour; that only the great State can be the really good State; that power—'majesty,' as the Oriental would say—is a thing good in itself?[1] There are ultimate questions as to what is good and what is bad that no argument can answer; ultimate values which cannot be discussed. But one can reduce those unarguable values to a minimum by appealing to certain social needs. A State which has plenty of food may not be a good State; but a State which cannot feed its population

[1] Admiral Mahan himself makes precisely this appeal:—
'That extension of national authority over alien communities, which is the dominant note in the world politics of to-day, dignifies and enlarges each State and each citizen that enters its fold... Sentiment, imagination, aspiration, the satisfaction of the rational and moral faculties in some object better than bread alone, all must find a part in a worthy motive. Like individuals, nations and empires have souls as well as bodies. Great and beneficent achievement ministers to worthier contentment than the filling of the pocket.'

cannot be a good State, for in that case the citizens will be hungry, greedy, and violent.

In other words, certain social needs and certain social utilities—which we can all recognise as indispensables—furnish a ground of agreement for the common action without which no society can be established. And the need for such a criterion becomes more manifest as we learn more of the wonderful fashion in which we sublimate our motives. A country refuses to submit its dispute to arbitration, because its 'honour' is involved. Many books have been written to try and find out precisely what honour of this kind is. One of the best of them has decided that it is anything which a country cares to make it. It is never the presence of coal, or iron, or oil, which makes it imperative to retain a given territory: it is honour (as Italy's Foreign Minister explained when Italy went to war for the conquest of Tripoli). Unfortunately, rival States have also impulses of honour which compel them to claim the same undeveloped territory. Nothing can prove—or disprove—that honour, in such circumstances, is invoked by each or either of the parties concerned to make a piece of acquisitiveness or megalomania appear as fine to himself as possible: that, just because he has a lurking suspicion that all is not well with the operation, he seeks to justify it to himself with fine words that have a very vague content. But on this basis there can be no agreement. If, however, one shifts the discussion to the question of what is best for the social welfare of both, one can get a *modus vivendi*. For each to admit that he has no right so to use his power as to deprive the other of means of life, would be the beginning of a code which could be tested. Each might conceivably have that right to deprive the other of means of livelihood, if it were a choice between the lives of his own people or others.

The economic fact is the test of the ethical claim: if it really be true that we must withhold sources of food from others because otherwise our own would starve, there is some ethical

justification for such use of our power. If such is not the fact, the whole moral issue is changed, and with it, to the degree to which it is mutually realised, the social outlook and attitude. The knowledge of interdependence is part, at least, of an attitude which makes the 'social sense'—the sense that one kind of arrangement is fair and workable, and another is not. To bring home the fact of this interdependence is not simply an appeal to selfishness: it is to reveal a method by which an apparently irreconcilable conflict of vital needs can be reconciled. The sense of interdependence, of the need of one for another, is part of the foundation of the very difficult art of living together.

Much mischief arises from the misunderstanding of the term 'economic motive.' Let us examine some further examples of this. One is a common confusion of terms: an economic motive may be the reverse of selfish. The long sustained efforts of parents to provide fittingly for their children—efforts continued, it may be, through half a lifetime—are certainly economic. Just as certainly they are not selfish in any exact sense of the term. Yet something like this confusion seems to overlie the discussion of economics in connection with war.

Speaking broadly, I do not believe that men ever go to war from a cold calculation of advantage or profit. I never have believed it. It seems to me an obvious and childish misreading of human psychology. I cannot see how it is possible to imagine a man laying down his life on the battle-field for personal gain. Nations do not fight for their money or interests, they fight for their rights, or what they believe to be their rights. The very gallant men who triumphed at Bull Run or Chancellorsville were not fighting for the profits on slave-labour: they were fighting for what they believed to be their independence: the rights, as they would have said, to self-government or, as we should now say, of self-determination. Yet it was a conflict which arose out of slave

labour: an economic question. Now the most elementary of all rights, in the sense of the first right which a people will claim, is the right to existence—the right of a population to bread and a decent livelihood.[1] For that nations certainly will fight. Yet, as we see, it is a right which arises out of an economic need or conflict. We have seen how it works as a factor in our own foreign policy: as a compelling motive for the command of the sea. We believe that the feeding of these islands depends upon it: that if we lost it our children might die in the streets and the lack of food compel us to an ignominious surrender. It is this relation of vital food supply to preponderant sea power which has caused us to tolerate no challenge to the latter. We know the part which the growth of the German Navy played in shaping Anglo-Continental relations before the War; the part which any challenge to our naval preponderance has always played in determining our foreign policy. The command of the sea, with all that that means in the way of having built up a tradition, a battle-cry in politics, has certainly bound up with it this life and death fact of feeding our population. That is to say it is an economic need. Yet the determination of some millions of Englishmen to fight for this right to life, to die rather than see the daily bread of their people in jeopardy, would be adequately described by some phrase about Englishmen going to war because it 'paid.' It would be a silly or dishonest gibe. Yet that is precisely the kind of gibe that I have had to face these fifteen years in attempting to disentangle the forces and motives underlying international conflict.

What picture is summoned to our minds by the word 'economics' in relation to war? To the critics whose indignation is so excited at the introduction of the subject at all into the discussion of war—and they include, unhappily, some of the

[1] It is not necessary to enter exhaustively into the difficult problem of 'natural right.' It suffices for the purpose of this argument that the claim of others to life will certainly be made and that we can only refuse it at a cost which diminishes our own chances of survival.

great names of English literature—'economic' seems to carry no picture but that of an obese Semitic stockbroker, in quaking fear for his profits. This view cannot be said to imply either much imagination or much sense of reality. For among the stockbrokers, the usurers, those closest to financial manipulation and in touch with financial changes, are to be found some groups numerically small, who are more likely to gain than to lose by war; and the present writer has never suggested the contrary.

But the 'economic futility' of war expresses itself otherwise: in half a Continent unable to feed or clothe or warm itself; millions rendered neurotic, abnormal, hysterical by malnutrition, disease, and anxiety; millions rendered greedy, selfish, and violent by the constant strain of hunger; resulting in 'social unrest' that threatens more and more to become sheer chaos and confusion: the dissolution and disintegration of society. Everywhere, in the cities, are the children who cry and who are not fed, who raise shrunken arms to our statesmen who talk with pride[1] of their stern measures of 'rigorous' blockade. Rickety and dying children, and undying hate for us, their murderers, in the hearts of their mothers—these are the human realities of the 'economics of war.'

The desire to prevent these things, to bring about an order that would render possible both patriotism and mercy, would save us from the dreadful dilemma of feeding our own children only by the torture and death of others equally innocent—the effort to this end is represented as a mere appeal to selfishness and avarice, something mean and ignoble, a degradation of human motive.

'These theoretical dilemmas do not state accurately the real conditions of politics,' the reader may object. 'No one proposes to inflict famine as a means of enforcing our policy' . . . 'England does not make war on women and children.'

[1] See Mr Churchill's declaration, quoted Part I Chapter V.

Not one man or woman in a million, English or other, would wittingly inflict the suffering of starvation upon a single child, if the child were visible to his eyes, present in his mind, and if the simple human fact were not obscured by the much more complex and artificial facts that have gathered round our conceptions of patriotism. The heaviest indictment of the military-nationalist philosophy we are discussing is that it manages successfully to cover up human realities by dehumanising abstractions. From the moment that the child becomes a part of that abstraction—'Russia,' 'Austria,' 'Germany'—it loses its human identity, and becomes merely an impersonal part of the political problem of the struggle of our nation with others. The inverted moral alchemy, by which the golden instinct that we associate with so much of direct human contact is transformed into the leaden cruelty of nationalist hate and high statecraft, has been dealt with at the close of Part I. When in tones of moral indignation it is declared that Englishmen 'do not make war on women and children,' we must face the truth and say that Englishmen, like all peoples, do make such war.

An action in public policy—the proclamation of the blockade, or the confiscation of so much tonnage, or the cession of territory, or the refusal of a loan—these things are remote and vague; not only is the relation between results and causes remote and sometimes difficult to establish, but the results themselves are invisible and far away. And when the results of a policy are remote, and can be slurred over in our minds, we are perfectly ready to apply, logically and ruthlessly, the most ferocious of political theories. It is of supreme importance then what those theories happen to be. When the issue of war and peace hangs in the balance, the beam may well be kicked one way or the other by our general political philosophy, these somewhat vague and hazy notions about life being a struggle, and nature red of tooth and claw, about wars being part of the cosmic process, sanctioned by professors and bishops and

writers. It may well be these vague notions that lead us to acquiesce in the blockade or the newest war. The typhus or the rickets do not kill or maim any the less because we do not in our minds connect those results with the political abstractions that we bandy about so lightly. And we touch there the greatest service which a more 'economic' treatment of European problems may perform. If the Treaty of Versailles had been more economic it would also have been a more humane and human document. If there had been more of Mr Keynes and less of M. Clemenceau, there would have been not only more food in the world, but more kindliness; not only less famine, but less hate; not only more life, but a better way of life; those living would have been nearer to understanding and discarding the way of death.

Let us summarise the points so far made with reference to the 'economic' motive.

We need not accept any hard and fast (and in the view of the present writer, unsound) doctrine of economic determinism, in order to admit the truth of the following:—

1. Until economic difficulties are so far solved as to give the mass of the people the means of secure and tolerable physical existence, economic considerations and motives will tend to exclude all others. The way to give the spiritual a fair chance with ordinary men and women is not to be magnificently superior to their economic difficulties, but to find a solution for them. Until the economic dilemma is solved, no solution of moral difficulties will be adequate. If you want to get rid of the economic preoccupation, you must solve the worst of the economic problem.

2. In the same way the solution of the economic conflict between nations will not of itself suffice to establish peace; but no peace is possible until that conflict is solved. That makes it of sufficient importance.

3. The 'economic' problem involved in international politics the use of political power for economic ends—is also one of

Right, including the most elemental of all rights, that to exist.

4. The answer which we give to that question of Right will depend upon our answer to the actual query of *The Great Illusion*: must a country of expanding population expand its territory or trade by means of its political power, in order to live? Is the political struggle for territory a struggle for bread?

5. If we take the view that the truth is contained in neither an unqualified affirmative nor an unqualified negative, then all the more is it necessary that the interdependence of peoples, the necessity for a truly international economy, should become a commonplace. A wider realisation of those facts would help to create that pre-disposition necessary for a belief in the workability of voluntary co-operation, a belief which must precede any successful attempt to make such co-operation the basis of an international order.

6. The economic argument of *The Great Illusion,* if valid, destroys the pseudo-scientific justification for political immoralism, the doctrine of State necessity, which has marked so much of classical statecraft.

7. The main defects of the Treaty of Versailles are due to the pressure of a public opinion obsessed by just those ideas of nations as persons, of conflicting interests, which *The Great Illusion* attempted to destroy. If the Treaty had been inspired by the ideas of interdependence of interest, it would have been not only more in the interests of the Allies, but morally sounder, providing a better ethical basis for future peace.

8. To go on ignoring the economic unity and interdependence of Europe, to refuse to subject nationalist pugnacities to that needed unity because 'economics' are sordid, is to refuse to face the needs of human life, and the forces that shape it. Such an attitude, while professing moral elevation, involves a denial of the right of others to live. Its worst defect, perhaps, is that its heroics are fatal to intellectual rectitude, to truth. No society built upon such foundations can stand.

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT ILLUSION ARGUMENT

THE preceding chapters have dealt rather with misconceptions concerning *The Great Illusion* than with its positive propositions. What, outlined as briefly as possible, was its central argument?

That argument was an elaboration of these propositions: Military preponderance, conquest, as a means to man's most elemental needs — bread, sustenance — is futile, because the processes (exchange, division of labour) to which the dense populations of modern Western society are compelled to resort, cannot be exacted by military coercion; they can only operate as the result of a large measure of voluntary acquiescence by the parties concerned. A realisation of this truth is indispensable for the restraint of the instinctive pugnacities that hamper human relationship, particularly where nationalism enters.[1] The competition for power so stimulates those pugnacities and fears, that isolated national power cannot ensure a nation's political security or independence. Political security and economic well-being can only be ensured by international co-

[1] Mr J. L. Garvin, who was among those who bitterly criticised this thesis on account of its 'sordidness,' now writes: 'Armageddon might become almost as frequent as General Elections if belligerency were not restrained by sheer dread of the consequences in an age of economic interdependence when even victory has ceased to pay.'
(Quoted in *Westminster Gazette*, Jan. 24, 1921.)

operation. This must be economic as well as political, be directed, that is, not only at pooling military forces for the purpose of restraining aggression, but at the maintenance of some economic code which will ensure for all nations, whether militarily powerful or not, fair economic opportunity and means of subsistence.

It was, in other words, an attempt to clear the road to a more workable international policy by undermining the main conceptions and prepossessions inimical to an international order.[1] It did not elaborate machinery, but the facts it dealt with point clearly to certain conclusions on that head.

While arguing that prevailing beliefs (false beliefs for the most part) and feelings (largely directed by the false beliefs) were the determining factors in international politics, the author challenged the prevailing assumption of the unchangeability of those ideas and feelings, particularly the proposition that war between human groups arises out of instincts and emotions incapable of modification or control or re-direction by conscious effort. The author placed equal emphasis on both parts of the proposition—that dealing with the alleged immutability of human pugnacity and ideas, and that which challenged the representation of war as an inevitable struggle for physical

[1] The introductory synopsis reads:—

What are the fundamental motives that explain the present rivalry of armaments in Europe, notably the Anglo-German? Each nation pleads the need for defence; but this implies that some one is likely to attack, and has therefore a presumed interest in so doing. What are the motives which each State thus fears its neighbours may obey?

They are based on the universal assumption that a nation, in order to find outlets for expanding population and increasing industry, or simply to ensure the best conditions possible for its people, is necessarily pushed to territorial expansion and the exercise of political force against others (German naval competition is assumed to be the expression of the growing need of an expanding population for a larger place in the world, a need which will find a realisation in the conquest of English Colonies or trade, unless these were defended); it is assumed, therefore, that a nation's relative prosperity is broadly determined by its political power; that nations being competing units, advantage, in the last resort, goes to the possessor of preponderant military force, the weaker going to the wall, as in the other forms of the struggle for life.

The author challenges this whole doctrine.

sustenance—if only because no exposure of the biological fallacy would be other than futile if the former proposition were true.[1]

If conduct in these matters is the automatic reaction to uncontrollable instinct and is not affected by ideas, or if ideas themselves are the mere reflection of that instinct, obviously it is no use attempting demonstrations of futility, economic or other. The more we demonstrate the intensity of our inherent pugnacity and irrationalism, the more do we in fact demonstrate the need for the conscious control of those instincts. The alternative conclusion is fatalism: an admission not only that our ship is not under control, but that we have given up the task of getting it under control. We have surrendered our freedom.

Moreover, our record shows that the direction taken by our pugnacities—their objective—is in fact largely determined by traditions and ideas which are in part at least the sum of conscious intellectual effort. The history of religious persecution —its wars, inquisitions, repressions—shows a great change (which we must admit as a fact, whether we regard it as good or bad) not only of idea but of feeling.[2] The book rejected

[1] See chapters *The Psychological Case for Peace, Unchanging Human Nature,* and *Is the Political Reformation Possible?*

'Not the facts, but men's opinions about the facts, is what matters. Men's conduct is determined, not necessarily by the right conclusion from facts, but the conclusion they believe to be right.'

In another pre-war book of the present writer (*The Foundations of International Polity*) the same view is developed, particularly in the passage which has been reproduced in Chapter VI of this book, 'The Alternative Risks of Status and Contract.'

[2] 'The cessation of religious war indicates the greatest outstanding fact in the history of civilised mankind during the last thousand years, which is this: that all civilised Governments have abandoned their claim to dictate the belief of their subjects. For very long that was a right tenaciously held, and it was held on grounds for which there is an immense deal to be said. It was held that as belief is an integral part of conduct, that as conduct springs from belief, and the purpose of the State is to ensure such conduct as will enable us to go about our business in safety, it was obviously the duty of the State to protect those beliefs, the abandonment of which seemed to undermine the foundations of con-

instinct as sufficient guide and urged the need of discipline by intelligent foresight of consequence.

To examine our subconscious or unconscious motives of conduct is the first step to making them conscious and modifying them.

This does not imply that instincts—whether of pugnacity or other—can readily be repressed by a mere effort of will. But their direction, the object upon which they expend themselves, will depend upon our interpretation of facts. If we interpret the hailstorm or the curdled milk in one way, our fear and hatred of the witch is intense; the same facts interpreted another way make the witch an object of another emotion, pity.

Reason may be a very small part of the apparatus of human conduct compared with the part played by the unconscious and subconscious, the instinctive and the emotional. The power of a ship's compass is very small indeed compared with the

---

duct. I do not believe that this case has ever been completely answered... Men of profound thought and profound learning to-day defend it, and personally I have found it very difficult to make a clear and simple case for the defence of the principle on which every civilised Government in the world is to-day founded. How do you account for this—that a principle which I do not believe one man in a million could defend from all objections has become the dominating rule of civilised government throughout the world?

'Well, that once universal policy has been abandoned, not because every argument, or even perhaps most of the arguments, which led to it, have been answered, but because the fundamental one has. The conception on which it rested has been shown to be, not in every detail, but in the essentials at least, an illusion, a *mis*conception.

'The world of religious wars and of the Inquisition was a world which had a quite definite conception of the relation of authority to religious belief and to truth—as that authority was the source of truth; that truth could be, and should be, protected by force; that Catholics who did not resent an insult offered to their faith (like the failure of a Huguenot to salute a passing religious procession) were renegade.

'Now, what broke down this conception was a growing realisation that authority, force, was irrelevant to the issues of truth (a party of heretics triumphed by virtue of some physical accident, as that they occupied a mountain region); that it was ineffective, and that the essence of truth was something outside the scope of physical conflict. As the realisation of this grew, the conflicts declined.'—*Foundations of International Polity*, p. 214.

power developed by the engines. But the greater the power of the engines, the greater will be the disaster if the relatively tiny compass is deflected and causes the ship to be driven on to the rocks. The illustration indicates, not exactly but with sufficient truth, the relationship of 'reason' to 'instinct.'

The instincts that push to self-assertion, to the acquisition of preponderant power, are so strong that we shall only abandon that method as the result of perceiving its futility. Co-operation, which means a relationship of partnership and give and take, will not succeed till force has failed.

The futility of power as a means to our most fundamental and social ends is due mainly to two facts, one mechanical, and the other moral. The mechanical fact is that if we really need another, our power over him has very definite limits. Our dependence on him gives him a weapon against us. The moral fact is that in demanding a position of domination, we ask something to which we should not accede if it were asked of us: the claim does not stand the test of the categorical imperative. If we need another's labour, we cannot kill him; if his custom, we cannot forbid him to earn money. If his labour is to be effective, we must give him tools, knowledge; and these things can be used to resist our exactions. To the degree to which he is powerful for service he is powerful for resistance. A nation wealthy as a customer will also be ubiquitous as a competitor.

The factors which have operated to make physical compulsion (slavery) as a means of obtaining service less economical than service for reward, operate just as effectively between nations. The employment of military force for economic ends is an attempt to apply indirectly the principle of chattel-slavery to groups; and involves the same disadvantages.[1]

[1] An attempt is made, in *The Great Illusion*, to sketch the process which lies behind the progressive substitution of bargain for coercion (The Economic Interpretation of the History of Development 'From Status to Contract') on pages 187-192, and further developed in a chapter 'the Diminishing Factor of Physical Force' (p. 257).

In so far as coercion represents a means of securing a wider and more effective social co-operation as against a narrower social co-operation, or more anarchic condition, it is likely to be successful and to justify itself socially. The imposition of Western government upon backward peoples approximates to the rôle of police; the struggles between the armed forces of rival Western Powers do not. The function of a police force is the exact contrary to that of armies competing with one another.[1]

The demonstration of the futility of conquest rested mainly on these facts. After conquest the conquered people cannot be

[1] 'When we learn that London, instead of using its police for the running in of burglars and "drunks," is using them to lead an attack on Birmingham for the purpose of capturing that city as part of a policy of "municipal expansion," or "Civic Imperialism," or "Pan-Londonism," or what not; or is using its force to repel an attack by the Birmingham police acting as the result of a similar policy on the part of the Birmingham patriots—when that happens you can safely approximate a police force to a European army. But until it does, it is quite evident that the two—the army and the police force—have in reality diametrically opposed rôles. The police exist as an instrument of social co-operation; the armies as the natural outcome of the quaint illusion that though one city could never enrich itself by "capturing" or "subjugating" another, in some wonderful (and unexplained) way one country can enrich itself by capturing or subjugating another....

'France has benefited by the conquest of Algeria, England by that of India, because in each case the arms were employed not, properly speaking, for conquest, but for police purposes, for the establishment and maintenance of order; and, so far as they filled that rôle, their rôle was a useful one....

'Germany has no need to maintain order in England, nor England in Germany, and the latent struggle, therefore, between these two countries is futile....

'It is one of the humours of the whole Anglo-German conflict that so much has the British public been concerned with the myths and bogeys of the matter, that it seems calmly to have ignored the realities. While even the wildest Pan-German does not cast his eyes in the direction of Canada, he does cast them in the direction of Asia Minor; and the political activities of Germany may centre on that area for precisely the reasons which result from the distinction between policing and conquest which I have drawn. German industry is coming to have a dominating situation in the Near East, and as those interests—her markets and investments—increase, the necessity for better order in, and the better organisation of, such territories, increases in corresponding degree. Germany may need to police Asia Minor.' (*The Great Illusion*, pp. 131-2-3.)

killed. They cannot be allowed to starve. Pressure of population on means of subsistence has not been reduced, but probably increased, since the number of mouths to fill eliminated by the casualty lists is not equivalent to the reduced production occasioned by war. To impose by force (e.g. exclusion from raw materials) a lower standard of living, creates (*a*) resistance which involves costs of coercion (generally in military establishments, but also in the political difficulties in which the coercion of hostile peoples—as in Alsace-Lorraine and Ireland—generally involves their conqueror), costs which must be deducted from the economic advantage of the conquest; and (*b*) loss of markets which may be indispensable to countries (like Britain) whose prosperity depends upon an international division of labour. A population that lives by exchanging its coal and iron for (say) food, does not profit by reducing the productivity of subject peoples engaged in food production.

In *The Great Illusion* the case was put as follows:—

'When we conquer a nation in these days, we do not exterminate it: we leave it where it was. When we "overcome" the servile races, far from eliminating them, we give them added chances of life by introducing order, etc., so that the lower human quality tends to be perpetuated by conquest by the higher. If ever it happens that the Asiatic races challenge the white in the industrial or military field, it will be in large part thanks to the work of race conservation, which has been the result of England's conquest in India, Egypt, and Asia generally.'—(pp. 191-192.)

'When the division of labour was so little developed that every homestead produced all that it needed, it mattered nothing if part of the community was cut off from the world for weeks and months at a time. All the neighbours of a village or homestead might be slain or harassed, and no inconvenience resulted. But if to-day an English county is by a general railroad strike cut off for so much as forty-eight hours from the rest of the

economic organism, we know that whole sections of its population are threatened with famine. If in the time of the Danes England could by some magic have killed all foreigners, she would presumably have been the better off. If she could do the same thing to-day half her population would starve to death. If on one side of the frontier a community is, say, wheat-producing, and on the other coal-producing, each is dependent for its very existence on the fact of the other being able to carry on its labour. The miner cannot in a week set to and grow a crop of wheat; the farmer must wait for his wheat to grow, and must meantime feed his family and dependents. The exchange involved here must go on, and each party have fair expectation that he will in due course be able to reap the fruits of his labour, or both starve; and that exchange, that expectation, is merely the expression in its simplest form of commerce and credit; and the interdependence here indicated has, by the countless developments of rapid communication, reached such a condition of complexity that the interference with any given operation affects not merely the parties directly involved, but numberless others having at first sight no connection therewith.

'The vital interdependence here indicated, cutting athwart frontiers, is largely the work of the last forty years; and it has, during that time, so developed as to have set up a financial interdependence of the capitals of the world, so complex that disturbance in New York involves financial and commercial disturbance in London, and, if sufficiently grave, compels financiers of London to co-operate with those of New York to put an end to the crisis, not as a matter of altruism, but as a matter of commercial self-protection. The complexity of modern finance makes New York dependent on London, London upon Paris, Paris upon Berlin, to a greater degree than has ever yet been the case in history. This interdependence is the result of the daily use of those contrivances of civilisation which date from yesterday—the rapid post, the

instantaneous dissemination of financial and commercial information by means of telegraphy, and generally the incredible progress of rapidity in communication which has put the half-dozen chief capitals of Christendom in closer contact financially, and has rendered them more dependent the one upon the other than were the chief cities of Great Britain less than a hundred years ago.—(pp. 49-50.)

'Credit is merely an extension of the use of money, and we can no more shake off the domination of the one than we can of the other. We have seen that the bloodiest despot is himself the slave of money, in the sense that he is compelled to employ it. In the same way no physical force can in the modern world set at naught the force of credit. It is no more possible for a great people of the modern world to live without credit than without money, of which it is a part. . . . The wealth of the world is not represented by a fixed amount of gold or money now in the possession of one Power, and now in the possession of another, but depends on all the unchecked multiple activities of a community for the time being. Check that activity, whether by imposing tribute, or disadvantageous commercial conditions, or an unwelcome administration which sets up sterile political agitation, and you get less wealth—less wealth for the conqueror, as well as less for the conquered. The broadest statement of the case is that all experience—especially the experience indicated in the last chapter—shows that in trade by free consent carrying mutual benefit we get larger results for effort expended than in the exercise of physical force which attempts to exact advantage for one party at the expense of the other.'—(pp. 270-272.)

In elaboration of this general thesis it is pointed out that the processes of exchange have become too complex for direct barter, and can only take place by virtue of credit; and it is by the credit system, the 'sensory nerve' of the economic organ-

ism, that the self-injurious results of economic war are first shown. If, after a victorious war, we allow enemy industry and international trade to go on much as before, then obviously our victory will have had very little effect on the fundamental economic situation. If, on the other hand, we attempt for political or other reasons to destroy our enemy's industry and trade, to keep him from the necessary materials of it, we should undermine our own credit by diminishing the exchange value of much of our own real wealth. For this reason it is 'a great illusion' to suppose that by the political annexation of colonies, territories with iron-mines, coal-mines, we enrich ourselves by the amount of wealth their exploitation represents.[1]

The large place which such devices as an international credit system must take in our international economy, adds enormously to the difficulty of securing any 'spoils of victory' in the shape of indemnity. A large indemnity is not impossible, but the only condition on which it can be made possible—a large foreign trade by the defeated people—is not one that will be readily accepted by the victorious nation. Yet the dilemma is absolute: the enemy must do a big foreign trade (or deliver in lieu of money large quantities of goods) which will compete with home production, or he can pay no big indemnity—nothing commensurate with the cost of modern war.

Since we are physically dependent on co-operation with

[1] 'If a great country benefits every time it annexes a province, and her people are the richer for the widened territory, the small nations ought to be immeasurably poorer than the great; instead of which, by every test which you like to apply—public credit, amounts in savings banks, standard of living, social progress, general well-being—citizens of small States are, other things being equal, as well off as, or better off than, the citizens of great. The citizens of countries like Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, are, by every possible test, just as well off as the citizens of countries like Germany, Austria, or Russia. These are the facts which are so much more potent than any theory. If it were true that a country benefited by the acquisition of territory, and widened territory meant general well-being, why do the facts so eternally deny it? There is something wrong with the theory.' (*The Great Illusion*, p. 44).

foreigners, it is obvious that the frontiers of the national State are not co-terminous with the frontiers of our society. Human association cuts athwart frontiers. The recognition of the fact would help to break down that conception of nations as personalities which plays so large a part in international hatred. The desire to punish this or that 'nation' could not long survive if we had in mind, not the abstraction, but the babies, the little girls, old men, in no way responsible for the offences that excited our passions, whom we treated in our minds as a single individual.[1]

As a means of vindicating a moral, social, religious, or cultural ideal—as of freedom or democracy—war between States, and still more between Alliances, must be largely ineffective for two main reasons. First, because the State and the moral unit do not coincide. France or the British Empire could not stand as a unit for Protestanism as opposed to Catholicism, Christianity as opposed to Mohammedanism, or Individualism as opposed to Socialism, or Parliamentary Government as opposed to Bureaucratic Autocracy, or even for European ascendancy as against Coloured Races. For both Empires include large coloured elements; the British Empire is more Mohammedan than Christian, has larger areas under autocratic than under Parliamentary government; has powerful parties increasingly Socialistic. The State power in both cases is being used, not to suppress, but to give actual vitality to the non-Christian or non-European or coloured elements that it has conquered. The second great reason why it is futile to attempt to use the military power of States for ends such as freedom and democracy, is that the instincts to which it is compelled to appeal, the spirit it must cultivate and the methods it is compelled increasingly to employ, are themselves inimical to the sentiment upon which freedom must rest. Nations that have won their freedom as the result of military

[1] See Chapters of *The Great Illusion*, *The State as a Person*, and *A False Analogy and its Consequences.*

victory, usually employ that victory to suppress the freedom of others. To rest our freedom upon a permanent basis of nationalist military power, is equivalent to seeking security from the moral dangers of Prussianism by organising our States on the Prussian model.

Our real struggle is with nature: internecine struggles between men lessen the effectiveness of the human army. A Continent which supported precariously, with recurrent famine, a few hundred thousand savages fighting endlessly between themselves, can support, abundantly a hundred million whites who can manage to maintain peace among themselves and fight nature.

Nature here includes human nature. Just as we turn the destructive forces of external nature from our hurt to our service, not by their unintelligent defiance, but by utilising them through a knowledge of their qualities, so can the irrepressible but not 'undirectable' forces of instinct, emotion, sentiment, be turned by intelligence to the service of our greatest and most permanent needs.

CHAPTER IV

ARGUMENTS NOW OUT OF DATE

For the purposes of simplicity and brevity the main argument of *The Great Illusion* assumed the relative permanence of the institution of private property in Western society, and the persistence of the tendency of victorious belligerents to respect it, a tendency which had steadily grown in strength for five hundred years. The book assumed that the conqueror would do in the future what he has done to a steadily increasing degree in the past, especially as the reasons for such policy, in terms of self-interest, have so greatly grown in force during the last generation or two. To have argued its case in terms of non-existent and hypothetical conditions which might not exist for generations or centuries, would have involved hopelessly bewildering complications. And the decisive reason for not adding this complication was the fact that *though it would vary the form of the argument, it would not effect the final conclusion.*

As already explained in the first part of this book (Chapter II) this war has marked a revolution in the position of private property and the relation of the citizen to the State. The Treaty of Versailles departs radically from the general principles adhered to, for instance, in the Treaty of Frankfurt; the position of German traders and that of the property of German citizens does not at all to-day resemble the position in which the Treaty of Frankfurt left the French trader and French private property.

The fact of the difference has already been entered into at some length. It remains to see how the change affects the general argument adopted in *The Great Illusion.*

It does not affect its final conclusions. The argument ran: A conqueror cannot profit by 'loot' in the shape of confiscations, tributes, indemnities, which paralyse the economic life of the defeated enemy. They are economically futile. They are unlikely to be attempted, but if they are attempted they will still be futile.[1]

Events have confirmed that conclusion, though not the expectation that the enemy's economic life would be left undisturbed. We have started a policy which does injure the economic life of the enemy. The more it injures him, the less it pays us. And we are abandoning it as rapidly as nationalist hostilities will permit us. In so far as pre-war conditions pointed to the need of a definitely organised international economic code, the situation created by the Treaty has only made the need more visible and imperative. For, as already explained in the first Part, the old understandings enabled industry to be built up on an international basis; the Treaty of Versailles and its confiscations, prohibitions, controls, have destroyed those foundations. Had that instrument treated German trade and industry as the Germans treated French in 1871 we might have seen a recovery of German economic life relatively as rapid as that which took place in France during the ten years which followed her defeat. We should not to-day be faced by thirty or forty millions in Central and Eastern Europe without secure means of livelihood.

The present writer confesses most frankly—and the critics of *The Great Illusion* are hereby presented with all that they

[1] In the synopsis of the book the point is put thus: 'If credit and commercial contract are tampered with an attempt at confiscation, the credit-dependent wealth is undermined, and its collapse involves that of the conqueror; so that if conquest is not to be self-injurious it must respect the enemy's propetry, in which case it becomes economically futile.'

can make of the admission—that he did not expect a European conqueror, least of all Allied conquerors, to use their victory for enforcing a policy having these results. He believed that elementary considerations of self-interest, the duty of statesmen to consider the needs of their own countries just emerging from war, would stand in the way of a policy of this kind. On the other hand, he was under no illusions as to what would result if they did attempt to enforce that policy. Dealing with the damage that a conqueror might inflict, the book says that such things as the utter destruction of the enemy's trade

could only be inflicted by an invader as a means of punishment costly to himself, or as the result of an unselfish and expensive desire to inflict misery for the mere joy of inflicting it. In this self-seeking world it is not practical to assume the existence of an inverted altruism of this kind.—(p. 29.)

Because of the 'interdependence of our credit-built finance and industry'

the confiscation by an invader of private property, whether stocks, shares, ships, mines, or anything more valuable than jewellery or furniture—anything, in short, which is bound up with the economic life of the people—would so react upon the finance of the invader's country as to make the damage to the invader resulting from the confiscation exceed in value the property confiscated—(p. 29).

Speaking broadly and generally, the conqueror in our day has before him two alternatives: to leave things alone, and in order to do that he need not have left his shores; or to interfere by confiscation in some form, in which case he dries up the source of the profit which tempted him—(p. 59).

All the suggestions made as to the economic futility of such

a course—including the failure to secure an indemnity—have been justified.[1]

In dealing with the indemnity problem the book did forecast the likelihood of special trading and manufacturing interests within the conquering nation opposing the only condition upon which a very large indemnity would be possible—that condition being either the creation of a large foreign trade by the enemy or the receipt of payment in kind, in goods which would compete with home production. But the author certainly did not think it likely that England and France would impose conditions so rapidly destructive of the enemy's economic life that they—the conquerors—would, for their own economic preservation, be compelled to make loans to the defeated enemy.

Let us note the phase of the argument that the procedure adopted renders out of date. A good deal of *The Great Illusion* was devoted to showing that Germany had no need to expand territorially; that her desire for overseas colonies was sentimental, and had little relation to the problem of providing for her population. At the beginning of 1914 that was certainly true. It is not true to-day. The process by which she supported her excess population before the War will, to put it at its lowest, be rendered extremely difficult of maintenance as the result of allied action. The point, however, is that we

[1] 'We need markets. What is a market? "A place where things are sold." That is only half the truth. It is a place where things are bought and sold, and one operation is impossible without the other, and the notion that one nation can sell for ever and never buy is simply the theory of perpetual motion applied to economics; and international trade can no more be based upon perpetual motion than can engineering. As between economically highly-organised nations a customer must also be a competitor, a fact which bayonets cannot alter. To the extent to which they destroy him as a competitor, they destroy him, speaking generally and largely, as a customer.... This is the paradox, the futility of conquest—the great illusion which the history of our own empire so well illustrates. We "own" our empire by allowing its component parts to develop themselves in their own way, and in view of their own ends, and all the empires which have pursued any other policy have only ended by impoverishing their own populations and falling to pieces.' (p. 75).

are not benefiting by this paralysis of German industry. We are suffering very greatly from it: suffering so much that we can be neither politically nor economically secure until this condition is brought to an end. There can be no peace in Europe, and consequently no safety for us or France, so long as we attempt by power to maintain a policy which denies to millions in the midst of our civilisation the possibility of earning their living. In so far as the new conditions create difficulties which did not originally exist, our victory does but the more glaringly demonstrate the economic futility of our policy towards the vanquished.

An argument much used in *The Great Illusion* as disproving the claims made for conquest was the position of the population of small States. 'Very well,' may say the critic, 'Germany is now in the position of a small State. But you talk about her being ruined!'

In the conditions of 1914, the small State argument was entirely valid (incidentally the Allied Governments argue that it still holds).[1] It does not hold to-day. In the conditions of 1920 at any rate, the small State is, like Germany, economically at the mercy of British sea power or the favoritism of the French Foreign Office, to a degree that was unknown before the War. How is the situation to develop? Is the Dutch or Swedish or Austrian industrial city permanently to be dependent upon the good graces of some foreign official sitting in Whitehall or the Quai d'Orsay? At present, if an industrialist in such a city wishes to import coal or to ship a cargo to one of the new Baltic States, he may be prevented owing to political arrangements between France and England. If that is to be the permanent situation of the non-Entente world, then peace will become less and less secure, and all our talk of having fought for the rights of the small and weak will be a farce. The friction, the irritation, and sense of grievance will prolong the unrest and uncertainty, and the

[1] See Part I, Chapter II.

resultant decline in the productivity of Europe will render our own economic problems the more acute. The power by which we thus arrogate to ourselves the economic dictatorship of Europe will ultimately be challenged.

Can we revert to the condition of things which, by virtue of certain economic freedoms that were respected, placed the trader or industrialist of a small State pretty much on an equality, in most things, with the trader of the Great State? Or shall we go forward to a recognised international economic system, in which the small States will have their rights secured by a definite code?

Reversion to the old individualist 'trans-nationalism' or an internationalism without considerable administrative machinery —seems now impossible. The old system is destroyed at its sources within each State. The only available course now is, recognising the fact of an immense growth in the governmental control or regulation of foreign trade, to devise definite codes or agreements to meet the case. If the obtaining of necessary raw materials by all the States other than France and England is to be the subject of wrangles between officials, each case to be treated on its merits, we shall have a much worse anarchy than before the War. A condition in which two or three powers can lay down the law for the world will indeed be an anti-climax.

We may never learn the lesson; the old futile struggles may go on indefinitely. But if we do put our intelligences to the situation it will call for a method of treatment somewhat different from that which pre-war conditions required.

For the purposes of the War, in the various Inter-Allied bodies for the apportionment of shipping and raw material, we had the beginnings of an economic League of Nations, an economic World Government. Those bodies might have been made democratic, and enlarged to include neutral interests, and maintained for the period of Reconstruction (which might in any case have been regarded as a phase properly subject

to war treatment in these matters). But these international organisations were allowed to fall to pieces on the removal of the common enmity which held the European Allies and America together.

The disappearance of these bodies does not mean the disappearance of 'controls,' but the controls will now be exercised in considerable part through vast private Capitalist Trusts dealing with oil, meat, and shipping. Nor will the interference of government be abolished. If it is considered desirable to ensure to some group a monoply of phosphates, or palm nuts, the aid of governments will be invoked for the purpose. But in this case the government will exercise its powers not as the result of a publicly avowed and agreed principle, but illicitly, hypocritically.

While professing to exercise a 'mandate' for mankind, a government will in fact be using its authority to protect special interests. In other words we shall get a form of internationalism in which the international capitalist Trust will control the Government instead of the Government's controlling the Trust.

The fact that this was happening more and more before the War was one reason why the old individualist order has broken down. More and more the professed position and function of the State was not its real position and function. The amount of industry and trade dependent upon governmental intervention (enterprises of the Chinese Loan and Bagdad Railway type) before the War was small compared with the quantity that owed nothing to governmental protection. But the illicit pressure exercised upon goverments by those interested in the exploitation of backward countries was out of proportion to the public importance of their interests.

It was this failure of democratic control of 'big business' by the pre-war democracies which helped to break down the old individualism. While private capital was apparently gaining control over the democratic forces, moulding the policy

of democratic governments, it was in fact digging its own grave. If political democracy in this respect had been equal to its task, or if the captains of industry had shown a greater scruple or discernment in their use of political power, the individualist order might have given us a workable civilisation; or its end might have been less painful.

The Great Illusion did not assume its impending demise. Democracy had not yet organised socialistic controls within the nation. To have assumed that the world of nationalisms would face socialistic regulation and control as between States, would have implied an agility on the part of the public imagination which it does not in fact possess. An international policy on these lines would have been unintelligible and preposterous. It is only because the situation which has followed victory is so desperate, so much worse than anything *The Great Illusion* forecast, that we have been brought to face these remedies to-day.

Before the War, the line of advance, internationally, was not by elaborate regulation. We had seen a congeries of States like those of the British Empire maintain not only peace but a sort of informal Federation, without limitation in any formal way of the national freedom of any one of them. Each could impose tariffs against the mother country, exclude citizens of the Empire, recognise no common defined law. The British Empire seemed to forecast a type of international Association which could secure peace without the restraints or restrictions of a central authority in anything but the most shadowy form. If the merely moral understanding which held it together and enabled co-operation in a crisis could have been extended to the United States; if the principle of 'self-determination' that had been applied to the white portion of the Empire were gradually extended to the Asiatic; if a bargain had been made with Germany and France as to the open door, and equality of access to undeveloped territory made a matter of defined agreement, we should have possessed the nucleus of a world

organisation giving the widest possible scope for independent national development. But world federation on such lines depended above all, of course, upon the development of a certain 'spirit,' a guiding temper, to do for nations of different origin what had already been done for nations of a largely common origin (though Britain has many different stocks—English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, and, overseas, Dutch and French as well). But the spirit was not there. The whole tradition in the international field was one of domination, competition, rivalry, conflicting interest, 'Struggle for life.'

The possibility of such a free international life has disappeared with the disappearance of the *laisser-faire* ideal in national organisation. We shall perforce be much more concerned now with the machinery of control in both spheres as the only alternative to an anarchy more devastating than that which existed before the War. For all the reasons which point to that conclusion the reader is referred once more to the second chapter of the first part of this book.

CHAPTER V

THE ARGUMENT AS AN ATTACK ON THE STATE

THERE was not before the War, and there has not been since, any serious challenge to the economic argument of *The Great Illusion*. Criticism (which curiously enough does not seem to have included the point dealt with in the preceding Chapter) seems to have centred rather upon the irrelevance of economic considerations to the problem of war—the problem, that is, of creating an international society. The answer to that is, of course, both explicit and implicit in much of what precedes.

The most serious criticism has been directed to one specific point. It is made notably both by Professor Spenser Wilkinson [1] and Professor Lindsay,[2] and as it is relevant to the existing situation and to much of the argument of the present book, it is worth dealing with.

The criticism is based on the alleged disparagement of the State implied in the general attitude of the book. Professor Lindsay (whose article, by the way, although hostile and misapprehending the spirit of the book, is a model of fair, sincere, and useful criticism) describes the work under criticism largely as an attack on the conception of 'the State as a person.' He says in effect that the present author argues thus:—

[1] *Government and the War*, pp. 52-59.
[2] *The Political Theory of Mr Norman Angell*, by Professor A. D. Lindsay, *The Political Quarterly*, December 1914.

'The only proper thing to consider is the interest or the happiness of individuals. If a political action conduces to the interests of individuals, it must be right; if it conflicts with these interests it must be wrong.'

Professor Lindsay continues:—

'Now if pacifism really implied such a view of the relation of the State and the individual, and of the part played by self-interest in life, its appeal has little moral force behind it. . . .

'Mr. Angell seems to hold that not only is the national State being superseded, but that the supersession is to be welcomed. The economic forces which are destroying the State will do all the State has done to bind men together, and more.'

As a matter of fact Professor Lindsay has himself answered his own criticism. For he goes on:—

'The argument of *The Great Illusion* is largely based on the public part played by the organisation of credit. Mr Angell has been the first to notice the great significance of its activity. It has misled him, however, into thinking that it presaged a supersession of political by economic control. . . . The facts are, not that political forces are being superseded by economic, but that the new industrial situation has called into being new political organisations.... To co-ordinate their activities ...will be impossible if the spirit of exclusive nationalism and distrust of foreigners wins the day; it will be equally impossible if the strength of our existing centres of patriotism and public spirit are destroyed.'

Very well. We had here in the pre-war period two dangers, either of which in Professor Lindsay's view would make the preservation of civilisation impossible: one danger was that men would over-emphasise their narrower patriotism and

surrender themselves to the pugnacities of exclusive nationalism and distrust of foreigners, forgetting that the spiritual life of densely packed societies can only be rendered possible by certain widespread economic co-operations, contracts; the other danger was that we should under-emphasise each our own nationalism and give too much importance to the wider international organisation of mankind.

Into which danger have we run as a matter of simple fact? Which tendency is it that is acting as the present disruptive force in Europe? Has opinion and statesmanship—as expressed in the Treaty, for instance—given too much or too little attention to the interdependence of the world, and the internationally economic foundations of our civilisation?

We have seen Europe smashed by neglecting the truths which *The Great Illusion* stressed, perhaps over-stressed, and by surrendering to the exclusive nationalism which that book attacked. The book was based on the anticipation that Europe would be very much more likely to come to grief through over-stressing exclusive nationalism and neglecting its economic interdependence, than through the decay of the narrower patriotism.

If the book had been written *in vacuo,* without reference to impending events, the emphasis might have been different.[1]

[1] In order that the reader may grasp more clearly Mr Lindsay's point, here are some longer passages in which he elaborates it:—

'If all nations really recognised the truth of Mr Angell's arguments, that they all had common interests which war destroyed, and that therefore war was an evil for victors as well as for vanquished, the European situation would be less dangerous, but were every one in the world as wisely concerned with their own interests as Mr Angell would have men to be, if they were nevertheless bound by no political ties, the situation would be infinitely more dangerous than it is. For unchecked competition, as Hobbes showed long ago, leads straight to war however rational men are. The only escape from its dangers is by submitting it to some political control. And for that reason the growth of economic relations at the expense of political, which Mr Angell heralds with such enthusiasm, is the greatest peril of modern times.

'If men are to avoid the danger that, in competing with one another in the small but immediate matters where their interests diverge, they may overreach themselves and bring about their mutual ruin, two things are essential, one moral or emotional, the other practical. It is not

But in criticising the emphasis that is thrown upon the welfare of the individual, Professor Lindsay would seem to be guilty of confusing the *test* of good political conduct with the *motive*. Certainly *The Great Illusion* did not disparage the need of loyalty to the social group—to the other members of the partnership. That need is the burden of most that has been written in the preceding pages when dealing with the facts of interdependence. An individual who can see only his own interest does not see even that; for such interest is dependent on others. (These arguments of egoism versus altruism are always circular.) But it insisted upon two facts which modern Europe seemed in very great danger of forgetting. The first was that the Nation-State was not the social group, not co-terminous with the whole of Society,

---

enough that men should recognise that what they do affects other men, and vice versa. They must care for how their actions affect other men, not only for how they may react on themselves. They must, that is, love their neighbours. They must further agree with one another in caring for certain ways of action quite irrespective of how such ways of action affect their personal interests. They must, that is, be not only economic but moral men. Secondly, recognising that the range of their personal sympathies with other men is more restricted than their interdependence, and that in the excitement of competition all else is apt to be neglected, they must depute certain persons to stand out of the competitive struggle and look after just those vital common interests and greater issues which the contending parties are apt to neglect. These men will represent the common interests of all, their common ideals and their mutual sympathies; they will give to men's concern for these common ends a focus which will enable them to resist the pull of divergent interests and round their actions will gather the authority which these common ends inspire....

'... Such propositions are of course elementary. It is, however, important to observe that economic relations are in this most distinquished from political relations, that men can enter into economic relations without having any real purpose in common. For the money which they gain by their co-operation may represent power to carry out the most diverse and conflicting purposes....

'... Politics implies mutual confidence and respect and a certain measure of agreement in ideals. The consequence is that co-operation for economic is infinitely easier than for political purposes and spreads much more rapidly. Hence it easily overruns any political boundaries, and by doing so has produced the modern situation which Mr Angell has described.'

20

only a very arbitrarily chosen part of it; and the second was that the *test* of the 'good State' was the welfare of the citizens who composed it. How otherwise shall we settle the adjustment between national right and international obligation, answer the old and inevitable question, 'What is the *Good* State?' The only intelligible answer is: the State which produces good men, subserves their welfare. A State which did not subserve the welfare of its citizens, that produced men morally, intellectually, physically poor and feeble, could not be a good State. A State is tested by the degree to which it serves individuals.

Now the fact of forgetting the first truth, that the Nation-State is not the whole of Society but only a part, and that we have obligations to the other part, led to a distortion of the second. The Hegelianism which denied any obligation above or beyond that of the Nation-State sets up a conflict of sovereignties, a competition of power, stimulating the instinct of domination, making indeed the power and position of the State with reference to rival States the main end of politics. The welfare of men is forgotten. The fact that the State is made for man, not man for the State, is obscured. It was certainly forgotten or distorted by the later political philosophers of Prussia. The oversight gave us Prussianism and Imperialism, the ideal of political power as an end in itself, against which *The Great Illusion* was a protest. The Imperialism, not alone in Prussia, takes small account of the quality of individual life, under the flag. The one thing to be sought is that the flag should be triumphant, be flown over vast territories, inspire fear in foreigners, and be an emblem of 'glory.' There is a discernible distinction of aim and purpose between the Patriot, Jingo, Chauvinist, and the citizen of the type interested in such things as social reform. The military Patriot the world over does not attempt to hide his contempt for efforts at the social betterment of his countryman. That is 'parish pump.' Mr Maxse or Mr Kipling is keenly interested

in England, but not in the betterment of Englishmen; indeed, both are in the habit of abusing Englishmen very heartily, unless they happen to be soldiers. In other words, the real end of politics is forgotten. It is not only that the means have become the end, but that one element of the means, power, has become the end.

The point I desired to emphasise was that unless we keep before ourselves the welfare of the individual as the *test* of politics (not necessarily the motive of each individual for himself) we constantly forget the purpose and aim of politics, and patriotism becomes not the love of one's fellow countrymen and their welfare, but the love of power expressed by that larger 'ego' which is one's group. 'Mystic Nationalism' comes to mean something entirely divorced from any attribute of individual life. The 'Nation' becomes an abstraction apart from the life of the individual.

There is a further consideration. The fact that the Nation-State is not co-terminous with Society is shown by its vital need of others; it cannot live by itself; it must co-operate with others; consequently it has obligations to those others. The demonstration of that fact involves an appeal to 'interest,' to welfare. The most visible and vital co-operation outside the limits of the Nation-State is the economic; it gives rise to the most definite, as to the most fundamental obligation—the obligation to accord to others the right to existence. It is out of the common economic need that the actual structure of some mutual arrangement, some social code, will arise, has indeed arisen. This makes the beginning of the first visible structure of a world society. And from these homely beginnings will come, if at all, a more vivid sense of the wider society. And the 'economic' interest, as distinct from the temperamental interest of domination, has at least this social advantage. Welfare is a thing that in society may well grow the more it is divided: the better my countrymen the richer is my life likely to become. Domination has not this quality: it is mutually exclusive. We

cannot all be masters. If any country is to dominate, somebody or some one else's country must be dominated; if the one is to be the Superior Race, some other must be inferior. And the inferior sooner or later objects, and from that resistance comes the disintegration that now menaces us.

It is perfectly true that we cannot create the kind of State which will best subserve the interests of its citizens unless each is ready to give allegiance to it, irrespective of his immediate personal 'interest.' (The word is put in inverted commas because in most men not compelled by bad economic circumstances to fight fiercely for daily bread, sheer physical sustenance, the satisfaction of a social and creative instinct is a very real 'interest,' and would, in a well-organised society, be as spontaneous as interest in sport or social ostentation.) The State must be an idea, an abstraction, capable of inspiring loyalty, embodying the sense of interdependence. But the circumstances of the independent modern national State, in frequent and unavoidable contact with other similar States, are such as to stimulate not mainly the motives of social cohesion, but those instincts of domination which become antisocial and disruptive. The nationalist stands condemned not because he asks allegiance or loyalty to the social group, but first, because he asks absolute allegiance to something which is not the social group but only part of it, and secondly, because that exclusive loyalty gives rise to disruptive pugnacities, injurious to all.

In pointing out the inadequacy of the unitary political Nation-State as the embodiment of final sovereignty, an inadequacy due to precisely the development of such organisations as Labour, the present writer merely anticipated the drift of much political writing of the last ten years on the problem of State sovereignty; as also the main drift of events.[1]

[1] I have in mind, of course, the writings of Cole, Laski, Figgis, and Webb. In *A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain,* Mr Webb writes:—

'Whilst metaphysical philosophers had been debating what was the

If Mr Lindsay finds the very mild suggestions in *The Great Illusion* touching the necessary qualification of the sovereignty of the Nation-State subversive, one wonders what his feelings are on reading, say, Mr Cole, who in a recent book (*Social Theory*) leaves the Political State so attenuated that one questions whether what is left is not just ghost. At the best the State is just one collateral association among others.

The sheer mechanical necessities of administration of an industrial society, so immeasurably more complex than the simple agricultural society which gave us the unitary political State, seem to be pushing us towards a divided or manifold sovereignty. If we are to carry over from the National State into the new form of the State—as we seem now in danger of doing—the attitude of mind which demands domination for 'our' group, the pugnacities, suspicions, and hostilities characteristic of nationalist temper, we may find the more complex society beyond our social capacity. I agree that we want a common political loyalty, that mere obedience to the momentary interest of our group will not give it; but neither will the temper of patriotism as we have seen it manifested in the European national State. The loyalty to some common code will probably only come through a sense of its social

---

nature of the State—by which they always meant the sovereign Political State—the sovereignty, and even the moral authority of the State itself, in the sense of the political government, were being silently and almost unwittingly undermined by the growth of new forms of Democracy.' (p. xv.)

In *Social Theory,* Mr Cole, speaking of the necessary co-ordination of the new forms of association, writes:—

'To entrust the State with the function of co-ordination would be to entrust it in many cases with the task of arbitrating between itself and some other functional association, say a church or a trade union.' There must be a co-ordinating body, but it 'must be not any single association, but a combination of associations, a federal body in which some or all of the various functional associations are linked together.' (pp. 101 and 134.) A reviewer summarises Mr Cole as saying: 'I do not want any single supreme authority. It is the sovereignty of the State that I object to, as fatal to liberty. For single sovereignty I substitute a federal union of functions, and I see the guarantee of personal freedom in the severalty which prevents any one of them from undue encroachments.'

need. (It is on the ground of its social need that Mr Lindsay defends the political State.) At present we have little sense of that need, because we have (as Versailles proved) a belief in the effectiveness of our own power to exact the services we may require. The rival social or industrial groups have a like belief. Only a real sense of interdependence can undermine that belief; and it must be a visible, economic interdependence.

A social sense may be described as an instinctive feeling for 'what will work.' We are only yet at the beginning of the study of human motive. So much is subconscious that we are certainly apt to ascribe to one motive conduct which in fact is due to another. And among the neglected motives of conduct is perhaps a certain sense of art—a sense, in this connection, of the difficult 'art of living together.' It is probably true that what some, at least, find so revolting in some of the manifestations of nationalism, chauvinism, is that they violently challenge the whole sense of what will work, to say nothing of the rights of others. 'If every one took that line, nobody could live.' In a social sense this is gross and offensive. It has an effect on one like the manners of a cad. It is that sort of motive, perhaps, more than any calculation of 'interest,' which may one day cause a revulsion against Balkanisation. But to that motive some informed sense of interdependence is indispensable.

CHAPTER VI

VINDICATION BY EVENTS

If the question merely concerned the past, if it were only a matter of proving that this or that 'School of thought' was right, this re-examination of arguments put forward before the War would be a sterile business enough. But it concerns the present and the future; bears directly and pertinently upon the reasons which have led us into the existing chaos; and the means by which we might hope to emerge. As much to-day as before the War (and far more obviously) is it true that upon the reply to the questions raised in this discussion depends the continuance of our civilisation. Our society is still racked by a fierce struggle for political power, our populations still demand the method of coercion, still refuse to face the facts of interdependence, still insist clamorously upon a policy which denies those facts.

The propositions we are here discussing were not, it is well to recall, merely to the effect that 'war does not pay,' but that the ideas and impulses out of which it grows, and which underlay — and still underlie — European politics, give us an unworkable society; and that unless they can be corrected they will increasingly involve social collapse and disintegration.

That conclusion was opposed, as we have seen, on two main grounds. One was that the desire for conquest and extension of territory did not enter appreciably into the causes of war,

'since no one really believed that victory could advantage them.' The other ground of objection, in contradistinction, was that the economic advantages of conquest or military predominance were so great and so obvious that to deny them was mere paradox-mongering.

The validity of both criticisms has been very thoroughly tested in the period that has followed the Armistice. Whether it be true or not that the competition for territory, the belief that predominant power could be turned to economic account, entered into the causes of the War, that competition and belief have certainly entered into the settlement and must be reckoned among the causes of the next war. The proposition that the economic advantages of conquest and coercion are illusory is hardly to-day a paradox, however much policy may still ignore the facts.

The outstanding facts of the present situation most worth our attention in this connection are these: Military predominance, successful war, evidently offer no solution either of specifically international or of our common social and economic problems. The political disintegration going on over wide areas in Europe is undoubtedly related very intimately to economic conditions: actual lack of food, the struggle for ever-increasing wages and better conditions. Our attempted remedies—our conferences for dealing with international credit, the suggestion of an international loan, the loans actually made to the enemy—are a confession of the international character of that problem. All this shows that the economic question, alike nationally and internationally, is not, it is true, something that ought to occupy all the energies of men, but something that will, unless dealt with adequately; is a question that simply cannot be swept aside with magnificent gestures. Finally, the nature of the settlement actually made by the victor, its characteristic defects, the failure to realise adequately the victor's dependence on the economic life of the vanquished, show clearly enough that, even in the free democracies, orthodox statecraft

did indeed suffer from the misconception which *The Great Illusion* attributed to it.

What do we see to-day in Europe? Our preponderant military power—overwhelming, irresistible, unquestioned—is impotent to secure the most elementary forms of wealth needed by our people: fuel, food, shelter. France, who in the forty years of her 'defeat' had the soundest finances in Europe, is, as a victor over the greatest industrial nation in Europe, all but bankrupt. (The franc has fallen to a discount of over seventy per cent.) All the recurrent threats of extended military occupation fail to secure reparations and indemnities, the restoration of credit, exchange, of general confidence and security.

And just as we are finding that the things necessary for the life of our peoples cannot be secured by military force exercised against foreign nations or a beaten enemy, so are we finding that the same method of force within the limits of the nation used by one group as against another, fails equally. The temper or attitude towards life which leads us to attempt to achieve our end by the forcible imposition of our will upon others, by dictatorship, and to reject agreement, has produced in some degree everywhere revolt and rebellion on the one side, and repression on the other; or a general disruption and the breakdown of the co-operative processes by which mankind lives. All the raw materials of wealth are here on the earth as they were ten years ago. Yet Europe either starves or slips into social chaos, because of the economic difficulty.

In the way of the necessary co-operation stands the Balkanisation of Europe. Why are we Balkanised rather than Federalised? Why do Balkan and other border States fight fiercely over this coalfield or that harbour? Why does France still oppose trade with Russia, and plot for the control of an enlarged Poland or a reactionary Hungary? Why does America now wash her hands of the whole muddle in Europe?

Because everywhere the statesmen and the public believe that

if only the power of their State were great enough, they could be independent of rival States, achieve political and economic security and dispense with agreements and obligations.

If they had any vivid sense of the vast dangers to which reliance upon isolated power exposed any State, however great; if they had realised how the prosperity and social peace of their own States depended upon the reconciliation and well-being of the vanquished, the Treaty would have been a very different document, peace would long since have been established with Russia, and the moral foundations of co-operation would be present.

By every road that presented itself, *The Great Illusion* attempted to reveal the vital interdependence of peoples—within and without the State—and, as a corollary to that interdependence, the very strict limits of the force that can be exercised against any one whose life, and daily—and willing—labour is necessary to us. It was not merely the absence of these ideas but the very active presence of the directly contrary ideas of rival and conflicting interest, which explained the drift that the present writer thought—and said so often—would, unless checked, lead Western civilisation to a vast orgy of physical self-destruction and moral violence and chaos.

The economic conditions which constitute one part of the vindication of *The Great Illusion* are of course those described in the first part of this book; particularly in the first chapter. All that need be added here are a few suggestions as to the relationship between those conditions and the propositions we are concerned to verify.

As bearing upon the truth of those propositions, we cannot neglect the condition of Germany.

If ever national military power, the sheer efficiency of the military instrument, could ensure a nation's political and economic security, Germany should have been secure. It was not any lack of the 'impulse to defence,' of the 'manly and virile qualities' so beloved of the militarist, no tendency to 'softness,'

no 'emasculating internationalism' which betrayed her. She fell because she failed to realise that she too, for all her power, had need of a co-operation throughout the world, which her force could not compel; and that she must secure a certain moral co-operation in her purposes or be defeated. She failed, not for lack of 'intense nationalism,' but by reason of it, because the policy which guided the employment of her military instrument had in it too small a regard for the moral factors in the world at large, which might set in motion material forces against her.

It is hardly possible to doubt that the easy victories of 1871 marked the point at which the German spirit took the wrong turning, and rendered her statesmen incapable of seeing the forces which were massing for her destruction. The presence in 1919 of German delegates at Versailles in the capacity of vanquished can only be adequately explained by recalling the presence there of German statesmen as victors in 1871. It took forty years for some of the moral fruits of victory to manifest themselves in the German spirit.

But the very severity of the present German lot is one that lends itself to sophistry. It will be argued: 'You say that preponderant military power, victory, is ineffective to economic ends. Well, look at the difference between ourselves and Germany. The victors, though they may not flourish, are at least better off than the vanquished. If we are lean, they starve. Our military power is not economically futile.'

If to bring about hardship to ourselves in order that some one else may suffer still greater hardship is an economic gain, then it is untrue to say that conquest is economically futile. But I had assumed that advantage or utility was to be measured by the good to us, not by the harm done to others at our cost. We are arguing for the moment the economic, and not the ethical aspect of the thing. Keep for a moment to those terms. If you were told that an enterprise was going to be extremely profitable and you lost half your fortune in it, you would cer-

tainly regard as curious the logic of the reply, that after all you *had* gained, because others in the same enterprise had lost everything.

We are considering in effect whether the facts show that nations must, in order to provide bread for their people, defeat in war competing nations who otherwise would secure it. But that economic case for the 'biological inevitability' of war is destroyed if it is true that, after having beaten the rival nation, we find that we have less bread than before; that the future security of our food is less; and that out of our own diminished store we have to feed a defeated enemy who, before his defeat, managed to feed himself, and helped to feed us as well.

And that is precisely what the present facts reveal.

Reference has already been made to the position of France. In the forty years of her defeat France was the banker of Europe. She exacted tribute in the form of dividends and interest upon investments from Russia, the Near East, Germany herself; exacted it in a form which suited the peculiar genius of her people and added to the security of her social life. She was Germany's creditor, and managed to secure from her conqueror of 1871 the prompt payment of the debts owing to her. When France was not in a position to compel anything whatsoever from Germany by military force, the financial claims of Frenchmen upon Germany were readily discountable in any market of the world. To-day, the financial claims on Germany, made by a France which is militarily all-powerful, simply cannot be discounted anywhere. The indemnity vouchers, whatever may be the military predominance behind them, are simply not negotiable instruments so long as they depend upon present policy. They are a form of paper which no banker would dream of discounting on their commercial merits.

To-day France stands as the conquerer of the richest ore-fields in the world, of territory which is geographically the industrial centre of Europe; of a vast Empire in Africa and Asia; in a position of predominance in Poland, Hungary,

and Rumania. She has acquired through the Reparations Commission such power over the enemy countries as to reduce them almost to the economic position of an Asiatic or African colony. If ever wealth could be conquered, France has conquered it. If political power could really be turned to economic account, France ought to-day to be rich beyond any nation in history. Never was there such an opportunity of turning military power into wealth.

Then why is she bankrupt? Why is France faced by economic and financial difficulties so acute that the situation seems inextricable save by social revolution, a social reconstruction, that is, involving new principles of taxation, directly aiming at the re-distribution of wealth, a re-distribution resisted by the property-owning classes. These, like other classes, have since the Armistice been so persistently fed upon the fable of making the Boche pay, that the government is unable to induce them to face reality.[1]

[1] The British Treasury has issued statements showing that the French people at the end of last year were paying £2. 7s., and the British people £15. 3s. per head in direct taxation. The French tax is calculated at 3.5. per cent. on large incomes, whereas similar incomes in Great Britain would pay at least 25 per cent. This does not mean that the burden of taxes on the poor in France is small. Both the working and middle classes have been very hard hit by indirect taxes and by the rise in prices, which is greater in France than in England.

The point is that in France the taxation is mainly indirect, this falling most heavily upon the poor; while in England it is much more largely direct.

The French consumers are much more heavily taxed than the British, but the protective taxes of France bring in comparatively little revenue, while they raise the price of living and force the French Government and the French local authorities to spend larger and larger amounts on salaries and wages.

The Budget for the year 1920 is made the occasion for an illuminating review of France's financial position by the reporter of the Finance Commission, M. Paul Doumar.

The expenditure due to the War until the present date amounts roughly to 233,000 million francs (equivalent, at the normal rate of exchange, to £9,320,000,000) whereof the sum of 43,000 million francs has been met out of revenue, leaving a deficit of 190 billions.

This huge sum has been borrowed in various ways—26 billions from the Bank of France, 35 billions from abroad, 46 billions in Treasury notes, and 72 billions in regular loans. The total public debt on July 1

With a public debt of 233,729 million of francs (about £9,300,000,000, at the pre-war rate of exchange); with the permanent problem of a declining population accentuated by the loss of millions of men killed and wounded in the war, and complicated by the importation of coloured labour; with the exchange value of the franc reduced to sixty in terms of the British pound, and to fifteen in terms of the American dollar,[1] the position of victorious France in the hour of her complete military predominance over Europe seems wellnigh desperate.

She could of course secure very considerable alleviation of her present difficulties if she would consent to the only condition upon which Germany could make a considerable contribution to Reparations; the restoration of German industry. But to that one indispensable condition of indemnity or reparation France will not consent, because the French feel that a flourishing Germany would be a Germany dangerous to the security of France.

In this condition one may recall a part of *The Great Illusion* case which, more than any other of the 'preposterous propositions,' excited derision and scepticism before the War. That was the part dealing with the difficulties of securing an indemnity. In a chapter (of the early 1910 Edition) entitled *The Indemnity Futility,* occurred these passages:—

'The difficulty in the case of a large indemnity is not so much the payment by the vanquished as the receiving by the victor...

'When a nation receives an indemnity of a large amount of gold, one or two things happens: either the money is exchanged for real wealth with other nations, in which case the greatly

---

is put at 233,729 millions, reckoning foreign loans on the basis of exchange at par.

M. Doumer declares that so long as this debt weighs on the State, the financial situation must remain precarious and its credit mediocre.

[1] January, 1921.

increased imports compete directly with the home producers, or the money is kept within the frontiers and is not exchanged for real wealth from abroad, and prices inevitably rise.... The rise in price of home commodities hampers the nation receiving the indemnity in selling those commodities in the neutral markets of the world, especially as the loss of so large a sum by the vanquished nation has just the reverse effect of cheapening prices and therefore, enabling that nation to compete on better terms with the conqueror in neutral markets.'—(p. 76.)

The effect of the payment of the French indemnity of 1872 upon German industry was analysed at length.

This chapter was criticised by economists in Britain, France, and America. I do not think that a single economist of note admitted the slightest validity in this argument. Several accused the author of adopting protectionist fallacies in an attempt to 'make out a case.' It happens that he is a convinced Free Trader. But he is also aware that it is quite impracticable to dissociate national psychology from international commercial problems. Remembering what popular feeling about the expansion of enemy trade must be on the morrow of war, he asked the reader to imagine vast imports of enemy goods as the means of paying an indemnity, and went on:—

'Do we not know that there would be such a howl about the ruin of home industry that no Government could stand the clamour for a week?... That this influx of goods for nothing would be represented as a deep-laid plot on the part of foreign nations to ruin the home trade, and that the citizens would rise in their wrath to prevent the accomplishment of such a plot? Is not this very operation by which foreign nations tax themselves to send abroad goods, not for nothing (that would be a crime at present unthinkable), but at below cost, the offence to which we have given the name of "dumping"? When it is carried very far, as in the case of sugar, even Free Trade

nations like Great Britain join International Conferences to prevent these gifts being made!....'

The fact that not one single economist, so far as I know, would at the time admit the validity of these arguments, is worth consideration. Very learned men may sometimes be led astray by keeping their learning in watertight compartments, 'economics' in one compartment and 'politics' or political psychology in another. The politicians seemed to misread the economies and the economists the politics.

What are the post-war facts in this connection? We may get them summarised on the one hand by the Prime Minister of Great Britain and on the other by the expert adviser of the British Delegation to the Peace Conference.

Mr Lloyd George, speaking two years after the Armistice, and after prolonged and exhaustive debates on this problem, says:—

'What I have put forward is an expression of the views of all the experts.... Every one wants gold, which Germany has not got, and they will not take German goods. Nations can only pay debts by gold, goods, services, or bills of exchange on nations which are its debtors.[1]

'The real difficulty ... is due to the difficulty of securing payment outside the limits of Germany. Germany could pay—pay easily—inside her own boundary, but she could not export

[1] An authorised interview published by the daily papers of January 28th, 1921.

M. Briand, the French Premier, in explaining what he and Mr Lloyd George arranged at Paris to the Chamber and Senate on February 3rd, remarked:—

'We must not lose sight of the fact that in order to pay us Germany must every year create wealth abroad for herself by developing her exports and reducing her imports to strictly necessary things. She can only do that to the detriment of the commerce and industry of the Allies. That is a strange and regrettable consequence of facts. The placing of an annuity on her exports, payable in foreign values, will, however, correct as much as possible this paradoxical situation.'

her forests, railways, or land across her own frontiers and make them over to the Allies. Take the railways, for example. Suppose the Allies took possession of them and doubled the charges; they would be paid in paper marks which would be valueless directly they crossed the frontier.

'The only way Germany could pay was by way of exports—that is by difference between German imports and exports. If, however, German imports were too much restricted, the Germans would be unable to obtain food and raw materials necessary for their manufactures. Some of Germany's principal markets—Russia and Central Europe—were no longer purchasers, and if she exported too much to the Allies, it meant the ruin of their industry and lack of employment for their people. Even in the case of neutrals it was only possible generally to increase German exports by depriving our traders of their markets.' [1]

There is not a line here that is not a paraphrase of the chapter in the early edition of *The Great Illusion*.

The following is the comment of Mr Maynard Keynes, ex-Advisor to the British Treasury, on the claims put forward after the Paris Conference of January 1921:—

'It would be easy to point out how, if Germany could compass the vast export trade which the Paris proposals contemplate, it could only be by ousting some of the staple trades of Great Britain from the markets of the world. Exports of what commodities, we may ask, in addition to her present exports, is Germany going to find a market for in 1922—to look no farther ahead—which will enable her to make the payment of between £150,000,000 and £200,000,000 including the export proportion which will be due from her in that year? Germany's five principal exports before the War were iron, steel, and machinery,

[1] Version appearing in the *Times* of January 28th, 1921.

coal and coke, woollen goods and cotton goods. Which of these trades does Paris think she is going to develop on a hitherto unprecedented scale? Or if not these, what others? And how is she going to finance the import of raw materials which, except in the case of coal and coke, are a prior necessity to manufacture, if the proceeds of the goods when made will not be available to repay the credits? I ask these questions in respect of the year 1922 because many people may erroneously believe that while the proposed settlement is necessarily of a problematic character for the later years—only time can show—it makes some sort of a start possible. These questions are serious and practical, and they deserve to be answered. If the Paris proposals are more than wind, they mean a vast re-organisation of the channels of international trade. If anything remotely like them is really intended to happen, the reactions on the trade and industry of this country are incalculable. It is an outrage that they should be dealt with by the methods of the poker party of which news comes from Paris.'[1]

If the expert economists failed to admit the validity of *The Great Illusion* argument fifteen years ago, the general public has barely a glimmering of it to-day. It is true that our miners realise that vast deliveries of coal for nothing by Germany disorganise our coal export trade. British shipbuilding has been disastrously affected by the Treaty clauses touching the surrender of German tonnage—so much so that the Government have now recommended the abandonment of these clauses, which were among the most stringent and popular in the whole Treaty. The French Government has flatly refused to accept German machinery to replace that destroyed by the German armies, while French labour refuses to allow German labour. in any quantity, to operate in the devastated regions. Thus coal, ships, machinery, manufactures, labour, as means of payment, have either already created great economic havoc or have

[1] *The Manchester Guardian*, Jan 31st, 1921.

been rejected because they might. Yet our papers continue to shout that 'Germany can pay,' implying that failure to do so is merely a matter of her will. Of course she can pay--if we let her. Payment means increasing German foreign trade. Suppose, then, we put the question 'Can German Foreign Trade be increased?' Obviously it can. It depends mainly on us. To put the question in its truer form shows that the problem is much more a matter of our will than of Germany's. Incidentally, of course, German diplomacy has been as stupid as our own. If the German representatives had said, in effect: 'It is common ground that we can pay only in commodities. If you will indicate the kind and quantity of goods we shall deliver, and will facilitate the import into Germany of, and the payment for, the necessary food and raw material, we will accept—on that condition—even your figures of reparation.' The Allies, of course, could not have given the necessary undertaking, and the real nature of the problem would have stood revealed. [1]

The review of the situation of France given in the preceding pages will certainly be criticised on the ground that it gives altogether too great weight to the temporary embarrassment, and leaves out the advantages which future generations of Frenchmen will reap.

Now, whatever the future may have in store, it will certainly have for France the task of defending her conquests if she either withholds their product (particularly iron) from the peoples of Central Europe who need them, or if she makes of their possession a means of exacting a tribute which they feel to be burdensome and unjust. Again we are faced by the same dilemma; if Germany gets the iron, her population goes on

[1] Mr John Foster Dulles, who was a member of the American delegation at the Peace Conference, has, in an article in *The New Republic* for March 30th, 1921, outlined the facts concerning the problem of payment more completely than I have yet seen it done. The facts he reveals constitute a complete and overwhelming vindication of the case as stated in the first edition of *The Great Illusion.*

expanding and her potential power of resistance goes on increasing. Thus France's burden of defence would grow steadily greater, while her population remained constant or declined. This difficulty of French deficiency in human raw material is not a remote contingency; it is an actual difficulty of to-day, which France is trying to meet in part by the arming of the negro population of her African colonies, and in part by the device of satellite militarisms, as in Poland. But the precariousness of such methods is already apparent.

The arming of the African negro carries its appalling possibilities on its face. Its development cannot possibly avoid the gravest complication of the industrial problem. It is the Servile State in its most sinister form; and unless Europe is itself ready for slavery it will stop this reintroduction of slavery for the purposes of militarism.

The other device has also its self-defeating element. To support an imperialist Poland means a hostile Russia; yet Poland, wedged in between a hostile Slav mass on the one side and a hostile Teutonic one on the other, herself compounded of Russian, German, Austrian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, and Jewish elements, ruled largely by a landowning aristocracy when the countries on both sides have managed to transfer the great estates to the peasants, is as likely, in these days, to be a military liability as a military asset.

These things are not irrelevant to the problem of turning military power to economic account: they are of the very essence of the problem.

Not less so is this consideration: If France should for political reasons persist in a policy which means a progressive reduction in the productivity of Europe, that policy would be at its very roots directly contrary to the vital interests of England. The foregoing pages have explained why the increasing population of these islands, that live by selling coal or its products, are dependent upon the high productivity of the outside world. France is self-supporting and has no such

pre-occupation. Already the divergence is seen in the case of the Russian policy. Britain direly needs the wheat of Russia to reduce the cost of living—or improve the value of what she has to sell, which is very nearly the same thing. France does not need Russian foodstuffs, and in terms of narrow self-interest (cutting her losses in Czarist bonds) can afford to be indifferent to the devastation of Russia. As soon as this divergence reaches a certain degree, rupture becomes inevitable.

The mainspring of French policy during the last two years has been fear—fear of the economic revival of Germany which might be the beginning of a military revival. The measures necessary to check German economic revival inevitably increase German resentment, which is taken as proof of the need for increasingly severe measures of repression. Those measures are tending already to deprive France of her most powerful military Allies. That fact still further increases the burden that will be thrown upon her. Such burdens must inevitably make very large deductions from the 'profits' of her new conquests.

Note in view of these circumstances some further difficulties of turning those conquests to account. Take the iron mines of Lorraine.[1] France has now within her borders what is, as already noted, the geographical centre of Continental industry. How shall she turn that fact to account?

For the iron to become wealth at all, for France to become the actual centre of European industry, there must be a European industry: the railroads and factories and steamship lines as consumers of the iron must once more operate. To do that they in their turn must have *their* market in the shape of active consumption on the part of the millions of Europe. In other words the Continent must be economically restored. But that

[1] As the Lorraine ores are of a kind that demand much less than their own weight of coal for smelting, it is more economic to bring the coal to the ore than vice versa. It was for political and military reasons that the German State encouraged the placing of some of the great furnaces on the right instead of the left bank of the Rhine.

it cannot be while Germany is economically paralysed. Germany's industry is the very keystone of the European industry and agriculture—whether in Russia, Poland, the Balkans, or the Near East—which is the indispensable market of the French iron.[1] Even if we could imagine such a thing as a reconstruction of Europe on lines that would in some wonderful way put seventy or eighty million Germans into a secondary place—involving as it would vast redistributions of population—the process obviously would take years or generations. Meantime Europe goes to pieces. 'Men will not always die quietly' as Mr Keynes puts it. What is to become of French credit while France is suppressing Bolshevik upheavals in Poland or Hungary caused by the starvation of cities through the new economic readjustments? Europe famishes now for want of credit. But credit implies a certain dependence upon the steady course of future events, some assurance, for instance, that this particular railway line to which advances are made will not find itself, in a year or two's time, deprived of its traffic in the interest of economic rearrangements resulting from an attempt to re-draw the economic map of Europe. Nor can such re-drawing disregard the present. It is no good telling peasants who have not ploughs or reapers or who cannot get fertilisers because their railroad has no locomotives, that a new line running on their side of the new frontier will be built ten or fifteen years hence. You cannot stop the patients breathing 'for just a few hours' while experiments are made with vital organs. The operation must adapt itself to the fact that all the time he must breathe. And to the degree to which we attempt violently to re-direct the economic currents, does the security upon which our credit depends decline.[2]

[1] It is worth while to recall here a passage from *The Economic Consequences of the Peace,* by Mr J. M. Keynes, quoted in Chapter I. of this book.

[2] There is one aspect of the possible success of France which is certainly worth consideration. France has now in her possession the greatest iron ore fields in Europe. Assume that she is so far successful

There are other considerations. A French journalist asks plaintively: 'If we want the coal why don't we go in and take it'—by the occupation of the Ruhr. The implication is that France could get the coal for nothing. Well, France has taken over the Saar Valley. By no means does she get the coal for nothing. The miners have to be paid. France tried paying them at an especially low rate. The production fell off; the miners were discontented and underfed. They had to be paid more. Even so the Saar has been 'very restless' under French control, and the last word, as we know, will rest with the men. Miners who feel they are working for the enemy of their fatherland are not going to give a high production. It is a long exploded illusion that slave labour—labour under physical compulsion—is a productive form of labour. Its output invariably is small. So assuredly France does not get this coal for nothing. And from the difference between the price which it costs her as owner of the mines and administrator of their workers, and that which she would pay if she had to buy the coal from the original owners and administrators (if there is a difference on the credit side at all) has to be deducted the ultimate cost of defence and of the political complications that that has involved. Precise figures are obviously not available; but it is equally obvious that the profit of seizure is microscopic.

Always does the fundamental dilemma remain. France will need above all, if she is to profit by these raw materials of

---

in her policy of military coercion that she succeeds in securing vast quantities of coal and coke for nothing. French industry then secures a very marked advantage—and an artificial and 'uneconomic' one—over British industry, in the conversion of raw materials into finished products. The present export by France of coal which she gets for nothing to Dutch and other markets heretofore supplied by Britain might be followed by the 'dumping' of steel and iron products on terms which British industry could not meet. This, of course, is on the hypothesis of success in obtaining 'coal for nothing,' which the present writer regards as extremely unlikely for the reasons here given. But it should be noted that the failure of French effort in this matter will be from causes just as disastrous for British prosperity as French success would be.

European industry, markets, and again markets. But markets mean that the iron which has been captured must be returned to the nation from which it was taken, on conditions economically advantageous to that nation. A central Europe that is consuming large quantities of metallurgical products is a Central Europe growing in wealth and power and potentially dangerous unless reconciled. And reconciliation will include economic justice, access to the very 'property' that has been seized.

The foregoing is not now, as it was when the present author wrote in similar terms a decade since, mere speculation or hypothesis. Our present difficulties with reference to the indemnity or reparations, the fall in the exchanges, or the supply of coal, are precisely of the order just indicated. The conqueror is caught in the grip of just those difficulties in turning conquest to economic account upon which *The Great Illusion* so repeatedly insisted.

The part played by credit—as the sensory nerve of the economic organism—has, despite the appearances to the contrary in the early part of the War, confirmed those propositions that dealt with it. Credit—as the extension of the use of money—is society's bookkeeping. The debauchery of the currencies means of course juggling with the promises to pay. The general relation of credit to a certain dependability upon the future has already been dealt with.[1] The object here is to call attention to the present admissions that the maintenance or re-creation of credit is in very truth an indispensable element in the recovery of Europe. Those admissions consist in the steps that are being taken internationally, the emphasis which the governments themselves are laying upon this factor. Yet ten years ago the 'diplomatic expert' positively resented the introduction of such a subject into the discussion of foreign affairs at all. Serious consideration of the subject was generally dismissed by the orthodox authority on international politics with some contemptuous reference to 'cosmopolitan usury.'

[1] See Part I, Chapter I.

Even now we seize every opportunity of disguising the truth to ourselves. In the midst of the chaos we may sometimes see flamboyant statements that England at any rate is greater and richer than before. (It is a statement, indeed, very apt to come from our European co-belligerents, worse off than ourselves.) It is true, of course, that we have extended our Empire; that we have to-day the same materials of wealth as—or more than—we had before the War; that we have improved technical knowledge. But we are learning that to turn all this to account there must be not only at home, but abroad, a widespread capacity for orderly co-operation; the diffusion throughout the world of a certain moral quality. And the war, for the time being, at least, has very greatly diminished that quality. Because Welsh miners have absorbed certain ideas and developed a certain temperament, the wealth of many millions who are not miners declines. The idea of a self-sufficing Empire that can disregard the chaos of the outside world recedes steadily into the background when we see the infection of certain ideas beginning the work of disintegration within the Empire. Our control over Egypt has almost vanished; that over India is endangered; our relations with Ireland affect those with America and even with some of our white colonies. Our Empire, too, depends upon the prevalence of certain ideas.

CHAPTER VII

COULD THE WAR HAVE BEEN PREVENTED?

'But the real irrelevance of all this discussion,' it will be said, 'is that however complete our recognition of these truths might have been, that recognition would not have affected Germany's action. We did not want territory, or colonies, or mines, or oil-wells, or phosphate islands, or railway concessions. We fought simply to resist aggression. The alternatives for us were sheer submission to aggression, or war, a war of self-defence.'

Let us see. Our danger came from Germany's aggressiveness. What made her more aggressive than other nations, than those who later became our Allies—Russia, Rumania, Italy, Japan, France? Sheer original sin, apart from political or economic circumstance?

Now it was an extraordinary thing that those who were most clamant about the danger were for the most part quite ready to admit—even to urge and emphasise as part of their case—that Germany's aggression was *not* due to inherent wickedness, but that any nation placed in her position would behave in just about the same way. That, indeed, was the view of very many pre-eminent before the War in their warnings of the German peril, of among others, Lord Roberts, Admiral Mahan, Mr Frederic Harrison, Mr Blatchford, Professor Wilkinson.

Let us recall, for instance, Mr Harrison's case for German aggression—Germany's 'poor access to the sea and its expanding population':—

'A mighty nation of 65,000,000, with such superb resources both for peace and war, and such overweening pride in its own superiority and might, finds itself closed up in a ring-fence too narrow for its fecundity as for its pretensions, constructed more by history, geography, and circumstances than by design—a fence maintained by the fears rather than the hostility of its weaker neighbours. That is the rumbling subterranean volcano on which the European State system rests.

'It is inevitable but that a nation with the magnificent resources of the German, hemmed in a territory so inadequate to their needs and pretensions, and dominated by a soldier, bureaucratic, and literary caste, all deeply imbued with the Bismarckian doctrine, should thirst to extend their dominions, and their power at any sacrifice—of life, of wealth, and of justice. One must take facts as they are, and it is idle to be blind to facts, or to rail against them. It is as silly to gloss over manifest perils as it is to preach moralities about them.... England, Europe, civilisation, is in imminent peril from German expansion.' [1]

Very well. We are to drop preaching moralities and look at the facts. Would successful war by us remove the economic and political causes which were part at least of the explanation

[1] *English Review,* January 1913.

Lord Roberts, in his 'Message to the Nation,' declared that Germany's refusal to accept the world's *status quo* was 'as statesmanlike as it is unanswerable.' He said further:—

'How was this Empire of Britain founded? War founded this Empire—war and conquest! When we, therefore, masters by war of one-third of the habitable globe, when *we* propose to Germany to disarm, to curtail her navy or diminish her army, Germany naturally refuses; and pointing, not without justice, to the road by which England, sword in hand, has climbed to her unmatched eminence, declares openly, or in the veiled language of diplomacy, that by the same path, if by no other, Germany is determined also to ascend! Who amongst us, knowing the past of this nation, and the past of all nations and cities that have ever added the lustre of their name to human annals, can accuse Germany or regard the utterance of one of her greatest a year and a half ago, (or of General Bernhardi three months ago) with any feelings except those of respect?' (pp. 8-9.)

of German aggression? Would her need for expansion become less? The preceding pages answer that question. Successful war by us would not dispose of the pressure of German population.

If the German menace was due in part at least to such causes as 'poor access to the sea,' the absence of any assurance as to future provision for an expanding population, what measures were proposed for the removal of those causes?

None whatever. Not only so, but any effort towards a frank facing of the economic difficulty was resisted by the very people who had previously urged the economic factors of the conflict, as a 'sordid' interpretation of that conflict. We have seen what happened, for instance, in the case of Admiral Mahan. He urged that the competition for undeveloped territory and raw materials lay behind the political struggle. So be it; replies some one; let us see whether we cannot remove that economic cause of conflict, whether indeed there is any real economic conflict at all. And the Admiral then retorts that economics have nothing to do with it. To Mr Frederic Harrison '*The Great Illusion* policy is childish and mischievous rubbish.' What was that policy? To deny the existence of the German or other aggressiveness? The whole policy was prompted by the very fact of that danger. Did the policy suggest that we should simply yield to German political pretensions? Again, as we have seen, such a course was rejected with every possible emphasis. The one outstanding implication of the policy was that while arming we must find a basis of co-operation by which both peoples could live.

In any serious effort to that end, one overpowering question had to be answered by Englishmen who felt some responsibility for the welfare of their people. Would that co-operation, giving security to others, demand the sacrifice of the interest or welfare of their own people? *The Great Illusion* replied, No, and set forth the reasons for that reply. And the setting-forth of those reasons made the book an 'appeal to avarice against

patriotism,' an attempt 'to restore the blessed hour of money getting.' Eminent Nonconformist divines and patriotic stockbrokers joined hands in condemning the appalling sordidness of the demonstration which might have led to a removal of the economic causes of international quarrel.

It is not true to say that in the decade preceding Armageddon the alternatives to fighting Germany were exhausted, and that nothing was left but war or submission. We simply had not tried the remedy of removing the economic excuse for aggression. The fact that Germany did face these difficulties and much future uncertainty was indeed urged by those of the school of Mr Harrison and Lord Roberts as a conclusive argument against the possibility of peace or any form of agreement with her. The idea that agreement should reach to such fundamental things as the means of subsistence seemed to involve such an invasion of sovereignty as not even to be imaginable.

To show that such an agreement would not ask a sacrifice of vital national interest, that indeed the economic advantages which could be exacted by military preponderance were exceedingly small or non-existent, seemed the first indispensable step towards bringing some international code of economic right within the area of practical politics, of giving it any chance of acceptance by public opinion. Yet the effort towards that was disparaged and derided as 'materialistic.'

One hoped at least that this disparagement of material interest as a motive in international politics might give us a peace settlement which would be free from it. But economic interest which is 'sordid' when appealed to as a means of preserving the peace, becomes a sacred egoism when invoked on behalf of a policy which makes war almost inevitable.

Why did it create such bitter resentment before the War to suggest that we should discuss the economic grounds of international conflict—why before the War were many writers who now demand that discussion so angry at it being suggested?

Among the very hostile critics of *The Great Illusion*—hostile mainly on the ground that it misread the motive forces in international politics—was Mr J. L. Garvin. Yet his own first post-war book is entitled: *The Economic Foundations of Peace,* and its first Chapter Summary begins thus:—

'A primary war, largely about food and raw materials: inseparable connection of the politics and economics of the peace.'

And his first paragraph contains the following:—

'The war with many names was in one main aspect a war about food supply and raw materials. To this extent it was Germany's fight to escape from the economic position of interdependence without security into which she had insensibly fallen—to obtain for herself independent control of an ample share in the world's supplies of primary resources. The war meant much else, but it meant this as well and this was a vital factor in its causes.'

His second chapter is thus summarised:—

'Former international conditions transformed by the revolution in transport and telegraphic intelligence; great nations lose their former self-sufficient basis: growth of interdependence between peoples and continents.... Germany without sea power follows Britain's economic example; interdependence without security: national necessities and cosmopolitan speculation: an Armageddon unavoidable.'

Lord Grey has said that if there had existed in 1914 a League of Nations as tentative even as that embodied in the Covenant, Armageddon could in any case have been delayed, and delay might well have meant prevention. We know now that if war had been delayed the mere march of events would

have altered the situation. It is unlikely that a Russian revolution of one kind or another could have been prevented even if there had been no war; and a change in the character of the Russian government might well have terminated on the one side the Serbian agitation against Austria, and on the other the genuine fear of German democrats concerning Russia's imperialist ambitions. The death of the old Austrian emperor was another factor that might have made for peace.[1]

Assume, in addition to such factors, that Britain had been prepared to recognise Germany's economic needs and difficulties, as Mr Garvin now urges we should recognise them. Whether even this would have prevented war, no man can say. But we can say—and it is implicit in the economic case now so commonly urged as to the need of Germany for economic security—that since we did not give her that security we did not do all that we might have done to remove the causes of war. 'Here in the struggle for primary raw materials' says Mr Garvin in effect over the six hundred pages more or less of his book, 'are causes of war that must be dealt with if we are to have peace.' If then, in the years that preceded Armageddon, the world had wanted to avoid that orgy, and had had the necessary wisdom, these are things with which it would have occupied itself.

Yet when the attempt was made to draw the attention of the world to just those factors, publicists even as sincere and able as Mr Garvin disparaged it; and very many misrepresented it by silly distortion. It is easy now to see where that pre-war attempt to work towards some solution was most defective: if greater emphasis had been given to some definite scheme for

[1] Lord Loreburn says: 'The whole train of causes which brought about the tragedy of August 1914 would have been dissolved by a Russian revolution... We could have come to terms with Germany as regards Asia Minor: Nor could the Alsace-Lorraine difficulty have produced trouble. No one will pretend that France would have been aggressive when deprived of Russian support considering that she was devoted to peace even when she had that support. Had the Russian revolution come, war would not have come.' (*How the War Came*, p. 278.)

assuring Germany's necessary access to resources, the real issue might have been made plainer. A fair implication of *The Great Illusion* was that as Britain had no real interest in thwarting German expansion, the best hope for the future lay in an increasingly clear demonstration of the fact of community of interest. The more valid conclusion would have been that the absence of conflict in vital interests should have been seized upon as affording an opportunity for concluding definite conventions and obligations which would assuage fears on both sides. But criticism, instead of bringing out this defect, directed itself, for the most part, to an attempt to show that the economic fears or facts had nothing to do with the conflict. Had criticism consisted in taking up the problem where *The Great Illusion* left it, much more might have been done—perhaps sufficient—to make Armageddon unnecessary.[1]

The importance of the phenomenon we have just touched upon—the disparagement before war of truths we are compelled to face after war—lies in its revelation of subconscious or unconscious motive. There grows up after some years of peace in every nation possessing military and naval traditions and a habit of dominion, a real desire for domination, perhaps even for war itself; the opportunity that it affords for the assertion of collective power; the mysterious dramatic impulse to 'stop the cackle with a blow; strike, and strike home.'

For the moment we are at the ebb of that feeling and another is beginning perhaps to flow. The results are showing in our policy. We find in what would have been ten years ago very strange places for such things, attacks upon the government for its policy of 'reckless militarism' in Mesopotamia or Persia. Al-

[1] Mr Walter Lippmann did tackle the problem in much the way I have in mind in *The Stakes of Diplomacy*. That book is critical of my own point of view. But if books like that had been directed at *The Great Illusion*, we might have made headway. As it is, of course, Mr Lippmann's book has been useful in suggesting most that is good in the mandate system of the League of Nations.

though public opinion did not manage to impose a policy of peace with Russia, it did at least make open and declared war impossible, and all the efforts of the Northcliffe Press to inflame passion by stories of Bolshevist atrocities fell completely flat. For thirty years it has been a crime of *lèse patrie* to mention the fact that we have given solemn and repeated pledges for the evacuation of Egypt. And indeed to secure a free hand in Egypt we were ready to acquiesce in the French evasion of international obligations in Morocco, a policy which played no small part in widening the gulf between ourselves and Germany. Yet the political position on behalf of which ten years ago these risks were taken is to-day surrendered with barely a protest. A policy of almost unqualified 'scuttle' which no Cabinet could have faced a decade since, to-day causes scarcely a ripple. And as to the Treaty, certain clauses therein, around which centred less than two years ago a true dementia—the trial of the Kaiser in London, the trial of war prisoners—we have simply forgotten all about.

It is certain that sheer exhaustion of the emotions associated with war explains a good deal. But Turks, Poles, Arabs, Russians, who have suffered war much longer, still fight. The policy of the loan to Germany, the independence of Egypt, the evacuation of Mesopotamia, the refusal to attempt the removal of the Bolshevist 'menace to freedom and civilisation' by military means, are explained in part at least by a growing recognition of both the political and the economic futility of the military means, and the absolute need of replacing or supplementing the military method by an increasing measure of agreement and co-operation. The order of events has been such as to induce an interpretation, bring home a conviction, which has influenced policy. But the strength and permanence of the conviction will depend upon the degree of intelligence with which the interpretation is made. Discussion is indispensable and that justifies this re-examination of the suggestions made in *The Great Illusion.*

In so far as it is mere emotional exhaustion which we are now feeling, and not the beginning of a new tradition and new attitude in which intelligence, however dimly, has its part, it has in it little hope. For inertia has its dangers as grave as those of unseeing passion. In the one case the ship is driven helplessly by a gale on to the rocks, in the other it drifts just as helplessly into the whirlpool. A consciousness of direction, a desire at least to be master of our fate and to make the effort of thought to that end, is the indispensable condition of freedom, salvation. That is the first and last justification for the discussion we have just summarised.

641
3
300

11-18/21 Bot of
Mer & Pne

Pd 3.00 12/7/1921